

THE SWORD AND THE COMPASS

What this story is about :

Here is the exciting life-story of John Smith, who was born a Lincolnshire village lad in 1580, and who later became a swashbuckling hero and a great soldier-of-fortune.

During his military career he was taken a prisoner by the Turks and sold into slavery. Eventually he managed to escape, and returned to England, where he was given a hero's welcome, but the call of far-off lands was too great for him.

Soon he left home again to sail for his greatest adventure in the New World ; his aim was to establish an English colony in Virginia. The hardships of the Jamestown colony were numerous and severe, and were only overcome by his courage and ability to deal successfully with the colonists and the Indians.

In spite of nearly being hanged by jealous power-loving colonists, and narrowly escaping death at the hands of hostile tribes, Smith succeeded in establishing Jamestown permanently, and in exploring much of the eastern coast of North America.

In one of his adventures he was rescued from death by an Indian princess, Pocahontas, who eventually married John Rolfe, an English gentleman of the colony, and later was presented at Court.



'Why have you and your people come into *my* land?' he said.
[p. 137]

Margaret Leighton

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TO HELEN FAY,
good friend of books,
with love

Chapter one



THE day was warm, more like May than the end of March. The casement window stood open. A few flies, still drowsy from the winter's cold, had found their way inside the schoolroom and were blundering heavily against the low ceiling beams and about the bent heads of the boys. Their buzzing blended with the sound of the scholars droning out their Latin and the high, querulous voice of the master as he corrected one pupil or called on the next to recite.

"John Smith."

There was no answer and the master spoke the name again: "John Smith!"

Miles away in a daydream, John felt a sharp nudge in his ribs from his seat-mate's elbow. The shove caught him unawares and sent him off the end of the bench to land, sprawling, on the floor.

"John Smith!" The master's voice was outraged. "That will be enough from you. Come forward."

John scrambled to his feet, flushed and furious. Dickon's suppressed snigger was like match set to

powder. John struck at him and the next instant both boys were rolling on the floor in desperate combat.

Before the master could separate them, John's nose was bleeding and one of Dickon's eyes was swollen and shut. Dickon was sent back to his seat, but John had ten blows of the ferrule for inattention and ten more for fighting in class. He endured the pain without a sound and returned to his place with his head still stubbornly erect.

The master sighed in weary exasperation as he met the boy's blazing glance. What was the use of trying to make a scholar out of this headstrong, high-tempered rascal? John's father, a hard-working tenant-farmer, had set his heart on it, however. The grammar school of Louth, in Lincolnshire, had been founded by the late King Edward VI especially to provide schooling for all boys, common as well as gentle. Good Queen Bess herself had paused here only last year on one of her royal progresses through the English countryside and she had expressed her gracious pleasure at seeing so many lads in homespun among the pupils.

Yes, the spread of learning was a wonderful blessing. The master would never dispute that. But everything about this boy, John Smith, proclaimed his restless, unbounded physical vigour. Crisply curling yellow hair; bold, direct eyes as blue as the sea; lithe, active frame, exceptionally well knit for his thirteen years. His father, George Smith, held a good lease-hold from Lord Willoughby of Eresby, the best of landlords. Surely his father's farm was the place for young John Smith. He could use that over-abundant energy there to some useful purpose. This quiet schoolroom was no place for him.

As for John Smith himself, he was afire with rebellion. This is the end ! he vowed to himself., I'll not take another beating or spend another day here poring over dusty books. Not another day !

Last night he had been awakened in his lodging-house attic by the high, shrill cries of wild geese flying overhead. The sound, as always, had sent a shiver prickling along his spine. What far-distant shores had they come from, what strange lands had they seen ? This morning the March wind, blowing into Louth over the flat Lincolnshire fields, had been more than ever full of the salt tang of the sea that lay just beyond the horizon. Even now while he sat here, a cloud was crossing the square of window, a cloud that moved on the blue sky like a great galleon on the water.

In every English port such ships were anchored, every day they set sail. How could an English boy keep his mind on lessons when he longed with all his heart to be off with the great sea captains like Drake, Hawkins or Grenville, cruising after Spanish treasure ships, or with Raleigh founding new kingdoms in the strange New World over the Western Ocean ?

Why should he wait a day longer ? A lad younger than he from his own village of Willoughby had served as cabin boy aboard one of the vessels that fought off the Spanish Armada. John had been only eight years old in the memorable year 1588, but he could still recall the flare of beacon fires on the right sky and the church bells clanging for that glorious victory.

Another village boy had sailed to the Indies and back again before he was sixteen. John had seen him swaggering down the dusty village street

between the thatch-roofed cottages, gold rings in his ears and a scarlet-feathered parrot on his shoulder.

"It's not everyone can get a place aboard a good vessel," the boy had told him in answer to his eager questions. "But if you have a little silver to hand to the steward or the cook——"

John had run home to beg his father for the chance to go to sea like that lucky fellow.

"My son a scurvy sailor?" He could almost hear his father's voice. "No! Get you an education, and then, with the good farm I can leave you, you'll *be* somebody in the world."

He shifted restlessly on his bench. His foot moved against his leather book-satchel and it fell over with a thud. The master raised his eyes and tapped warningly on his desk with his ferrule. But John was staring down at the satchel as though he had never seen it before.

"A little silver," the sailor boy had said.

An idea took sudden shape in John's mind and his heart began to pound.

As soon as class was over, he ran, satchel in hand, through the narrow cobbled streets of Louth to a shop where he had seen old books for sale. The shopkeeper struck a hard bargain but he bought books, satchel and all. The few silver coins clinked gaily in John's pocket as he hurried back to his lodgings. Now he had the money! He needed only to gather his clothes together, then off and away down the high road to the sea and all aboard for adventure!

At the corner of the street where his lodging stood, he stopped short. A horse was tied to the doorpost. It was Rowley from his own farm, caked with mud and dust as though he had been ridden hard. Could

his father have guessed his plan and come to stop him? But how?

Besides—he drew a freer breath—his father never rode Rowley, always the bay mare. Probably it was one of the farm servants with clean linen for him, or a message. But it was with a sense of foreboding that he opened the door and went inside.

Mistress Foster, his landlady, was sitting by the kitchen fire and with her was old Hodge, his father's eldest servant. Both looked up solemnly when John entered and the woman touched her apron to her eyes.

“Young master, I ha' brought bad news,” Hodge said. “Your father was took sick three days ago and died yesterday morn. Your mother sent me to fetch you home.”

It was a sad journey. John's grief was the sharper for the knowledge that he had been disobeying his father's wishes at such a time. As though in sympathy, clouds gathered, the sky darkened and rain began to pour down. John rode behind Hodge on Rowley's broad rump, glad to hide his sorrow against the old man's wet, leather-jacketed back. The roads were rivers of mud between the long flat fields where new grain showed green above the soaked brown earth.

Lord Willoughby of Eresby, great noble of Queen Elizabeth's court though he was, rode over from his manor hall to his tenant's simple funeral. The widow was so flustered by the honour that she could only curtsy and stammer in reply to his words of sympathy. He spoke to the younger children, Francis and Alice, and laid a hand on John's drooping shoulders.

“Your father was a good man and I shall miss

him. If ever you need help or counsel, come to me, lad. For your honest father's sake, you may count me as your friend."

George Smith had appointed two of his neighbours to be John's guardians during his minority. To the boy's relief they decided not to send him back to school.

"But his father wanted him to be a scholar," his mother protested uncertainly.

Master Mettham, one of the guardians, shook his head.

"Your husband, rest his soul, was reaching beyond his station and his means. No, the farm is the place for that sturdy lad."

But after two turbulent years his guardians were ready to admit that the restless, high-spirited boy was not cut out for the plodding life of a farmer.

"Francis can learn to run the farm. We'll apprentice this boy to a good trade," the guardians decided.

So John Smith was apprenticed to Master Thomas Sendall, leading merchant of King's Lynn in Norfolk. He rode off in the highest spirits, for Lynn was a seaport and Sendall owned several tall ships.

"Surely there'll be a place for me in one of them," he thought. "What sights I'll see, what adventures I'll have before I see Willoughby again!"

The port of Lynn proved to be all that he had hoped. Whenever he could escape from his work in the warehouse, he hurried down to the harbourside to wander along the quays and stare at the swaying forest of ships' masts. After his inland life, every vessel fascinated him, from the smallest skiff that plied the sluggish green harbour water to the highest-towering caravel. Eagerly he breathed the smells

of salt and tar and rope and the spicy odours that rose from the holds of merchantmen returned from strange, far ports. No music had ever sounded so stirring as the sailors' chanties, no tales so thrilling as theirs of their voyages.

The weeks and months passed, and one after another of Master Sendall's ships came into harbour, loaded and set sail again. As each one anchored John Smith begged for a place aboard her, but each time on one excuse or another he was refused. At last he could bear it no longer. Flat apprentice cap in hand, he stood before Master Sendall's high desk in his shadowy counting room.

"When will I be allowed to go to sea?" he demanded.

Sendall laid down his quill pen.

"I suppose you must be told sooner or later," he said. "Never, John. It was part of my bargain with your guardians that you should not be sent to sea. Before your father died, he told them how much he opposed it."

John's face flamed.

"But—but—— Why wasn't *I* told of this bargain? My guardians knew that I wanted to go to sea more than anything in the world. I only agreed to become your apprentice because of the chance to sail on one of your ships."

The merchant frowned.

"Come, come, don't stand there arguing with me. Some day you'll thank us all, for there's no harder life than a sailor's, believe me. When your apprenticeship is served out, you may please yourself. But for now, get back to your work and forget this foolish notion."

When his apprenticeship was served out. Seven

years in that dusty warehouse, seven years perched on a stool figuring accounts. Resentment at the unfair trickery burned unbearably in John's throat. He turned, dashed out of the shop and went running down the narrow cobbled street, pushing his way blindly through the passers-by.

At last the hot flood of his rage subsided a little. He began to walk more slowly, drifting with the crowd. He had arrived at the market square, he discovered. At any other time he would have enjoyed the colourful booths and the enticing display of goods, but now he was full of his own problem. Could he slip aboard a vessel and sail, anyway? No, for he was well known here on the waterfront. It was a crime for an apprentice to leave his master without permission. He'd only be caught and soundly beaten.

Now the ancient city gate loomed before him. Should he leave Lynn, make his way to some other port and try his luck there? As he stood considering, above the clatter and confusion of the street he heard a man's loud, harsh voice. A pedlar was hawking broadside ballads. He came nearer, holding one crudely printed sheet high, the others bundled under his arm.

"Here you are, lads and lasses of Lynn," he bawled. "The latest ballad from London, favourite song at Her Majesty's court, the doleful ballad of Captain Willoughby and his voyage into the northern sea. Buy the latest song from London——" and he moved on, singing a snatch or two of the tune, then bellowing its praise again.

The name of Willoughby had caught John's ear. Suddenly a new idea brought fresh hope. It wasn't the heroic captain, lost so long ago, of whom he was

thinking, but of his father's landlord, the great Lord Willoughby of Eresby.

"Come to me if you need help or counsel," he had said. "You may count me as your friend."

He had not spoken idly or carelessly, John felt sure. He would go to him and ask his aid, he decided.

From King's Lynn in Norfolk to Willoughby in Lincolnshire was a long journey. John was dusty and footsore when he reached Eresby Hall at last. He had walked the entire distance, slept under hedges and eaten only what the pennies he had in his purse could buy him—one small loaf of bread. He looked so bedraggled that the servants at Eresby took him for a beggar boy and refused to let him in. At last the steward, who had known John's father, believed his story. He led him to where the nobleman and his lady were taking the air in a garden summer-house.

Lord Willoughby looked sterner and more formidable than John had remembered him, and the boy felt his knees begin to quake as he stood before him to tell his story. Lady Willoughby sat stiffly erect, her skirts spread about her. She waved a jewel-handled fan slowly and looked John up and down with a cool, measuring stare that brought the colour into his face. When he had finished his plea, she touched her husband's sleeve.

"This is far too pretty a youth to hide behind a counter or send back to ploughing," she said. "Put him in my livery and he'll make as smart a page as any in the household."

A lady's page! John's horror of such a fate must have shown plainly in his face, for Lord Willoughby smiled, as he shook his head.

"No, my dear, he's stouter stuff. That breadth of shoulder and length of arm—a swordsman's build, or I'm no judge. Not a ploughboy or a shopkeeper, no, or a sailor either, John, for I respect your father's memory and would not go against his wishes. But I vow I like your spirit and I'll help you. It will take a little thought, however. Meanwhile"—he turned to his steward—"this boy will stay with us. See that he has food and clean clothing and a place to sleep."

Within a week John was summoned by his lordship's secretary.

"My lord's heir, Master Robert Bertie, has gone abroad with his tutor and is now at Orleans in France. Master Peregrine, his younger brother, is shortly to be sent there to join them. His lordship offers you a place as travelling companion and attendant to Master Peregrine on this journey. You are a very lucky young fellow."

Lucky was too mild a word, John agreed heartily. Of course, his guardians' consent had to be secured, and a release from his apprenticeship. It took no more than a word from the powerful nobleman to get both. Soon John was travelling up to London with Master Peregrine to be outfitted for the journey. There was no happier boy in all of England on the day they finally took ship. He was launched on blue water at last!

The channel was stormy, but soon the coast of France rose cloud-like on the horizon. They anchored in a busy harbour, debarked into smaller boats and were rowed to the quayside. For the first time in his life John Smith's restless feet were planted on foreign soil and his eager, observant, retentive mind was taking in everything he saw.

They took horses and set off on the road to Orleans. As they journeyed, John saw much that was new and strange and many things he must learn more about—but how could he question the people he saw if he could not speak their language? He therefore set himself to learn it. Soon he was adding phrases and sentences to his small store of words and using signs and gestures where words failed. His friendliness and interest pleased the peasants and inn servants and they responded helpfully.

"This farm lad has an amazing gift for foreign tongues," he heard one of the men in the party tell Master Robert's tutor, when they reached Orleans at last.

When the young gentlemen started on their tour of Italy, it was a sad blow for John to learn that his services would no longer be needed.

"Two lively lads are enough for me to keep in hand while we travel," the tutor said. "That's all I bargained for. To add a third—and this raw country boy at that—would drive me distracted in a fortnight."

When they said good-bye, Master Peregrine, already homesick for England, sniffed back tears. Even Master Robert, who had known John only for the time they had spent together in Orleans, gave him a present of a finely decorated sheath for his dagger.

"I wish I were going home with you," he said rebelliously. "I'm tired of jabbering foreigners. It was good to hear your honest Lincolnshire speech for a change."

But John Smith had no intention in the world of going back to Willoughby. He had been paid off with a purse of gold for his services and given a good

horse for his journey to the coast. Already he had a plan. Orleans had rung with tales of the heroic and popular young king of France, Henry of Navarre, tales that had fired John's imagination. First, he would see the sights of the famous city of Paris. Then he would start his search for adventure not by sea, but by land. He would enlist as a soldier-of-fortune in King Henry's army, he decided, and he rode through a haze of golden dreams as he turned his horse's head northward.

He stopped for his first night's lodging at a comfortable-looking inn. While he was trying to make a stable boy understand his directions for grooming his horse, a tall, lean man who had been lounging in the doorway stepped forward.

"Can I be of assistance, young gentleman?" he asked, speaking English with a broad Scots burr.

His name was David Hume, he said, and before John was quite sure how it happened, he had established them both at an inn table.

"Don't thank me—it's a pleasure," he insisted, setting to work on the dinner before them. "I know what it is to be young and alone in a foreign land. It happens that I'm on my way to Paris, too, and I'll escort you there gladly."

Master Hume, it seemed, was temporarily out of funds, and if John would pay for his food and lodging and the hire of a horse for him, Hume could show him the sights of Paris. "I've taken a liking to you, laddie. We'll not discuss any further payment for my services, so that's an end to the matter."

The Scotsman was entertaining company. He had an answer ready for every question John could put to him about all they saw along the way and the great city they were approaching. ~~...and~~ his appetite

for good food and wine was a heavy drain on John's purse. But to be able to spend money in this lordly way was a new and delightful experience for the boy.

Rain was falling on the grey cobblestones and grey roofs when they reached Paris. They found lodging in a high narrow house overlooking the River Seine. The rain dampened John's spirits, as did the price he had to pay for the rooms. He emptied what was left in his purse on the table and counted the coins in dismay.

"Is that all you have, laddie?" David Hume said, looking suddenly sober. "You'd best send to England for more, and quickly, too."

When he learned that John could expect nothing from his home, he gave a long whistle and pulled for a moment at his lower lip.

"You mean you're only a tenant-farmer's son?" he asked incredulously. "Why, from your clothes and the way you carry yourself, I judged you to be an earl's heir, no less. I thought you were using the name of John Smith for an incognito." Then his face cleared a little. "Well, there's your horse. It will bring a good price. I know an honest dealer——"

That money lasted barely two weeks. When it was gone, David Hume took his leave. Before they parted he gave John a packet of letters addressed to citizens of Edinburgh in Scotland.

"Present these and your fortune will be made. The gentlemen are friends of mine, devoted to me, and they are all most influential. For my sake they will recommend you to King James himself. No, don't try to thank me. I'm glad to help so likely a youngster ahead in the world. Farewell and good luck to you, laddie!" And he was gone.

Penniless, but somehow relieved to be rid of Hume and independent once more, John hurried to the nearest army barracks. In his stumbling French he offered his services as a recruit.

The bearded sergeant looked him up and down, then threw back his head and laughed.

"Enlist? You? Don't you know that peace is declared? Hundreds of experienced soldiers are being dismissed every day. Go back to England, youngster, and play with your tops and balls."

What little French John knew deserted him. He stood glaring at the man, his hand clenched on the hilt of his dagger, while he searched furiously for the angry words he needed.

Suddenly the sergeant grinned.

"Spoiling for a fight, cockerel? Well, there's plenty of it still going on in the Low Countries where the Hollanders are trying to drive the Spaniards out. Go down to Havre de Grace and look up your fellow countryman, Captain Duxbury. He's recruiting troops for Prince Maurice and he might take you on."

Chapter two



By selling Master Robert's farewell gift, John Smith was able to make his way down the river to Havre de Grace. There he found Captain Duxbury without difficulty and enlisted under him. Duxbury was a well-known professional soldier. He had joined the Dutch under Maurice of Nassau in their grim struggle to free themselves from England's old enemy, Spain.

At Turnhout in January, 1597, a few days past seventeen, John Smith had his first taste of battle smoke. Standing with his comrades along ramparts flung up across the flat land, he peered over the snow at the dark, advancing Spanish lines. The man beside him blew the end of his long slow-match to a fiery glow. John did the same, but as he gripped his musket he felt something cold move slowly up his spine. A nausea of fear and doubt crawled in his vitals. Would he bear himself like a man or give way to a coward's panic? How could he be sure?

Then the onslaught came. Deafened by the roar of musketry, strangled with smoke, he forgot everything

else in the blind hand-to-hand struggle as they met the Spanish charge. Then all at once it was over and, somehow, he was alive, unhurt and undisgraced.

Turnhout was a decisive victory, but to John's surprise his fellow soldiers, veterans of many battles, showed little joy.

"If we were fighting in our enemy's country there'd be something to cheer about," one of them said sourly, hammering at a dented breastplate. "We could all have got a fortune in booty by now. But here among our precious allies a man's only chance is to take a high-born Don prisoner and hold him for ransom. And how can a poor foot-soldier do that when our officers have horses to ride and sharp eyes for rich captives?"

The campaign continued, other battles followed. Somewhere along the way the eager, heedless, head-strong boy vanished for ever. Soldiering was an exacting trade that must be learned like any other, and war was a harsh and brutal teacher. Months passed, then seasons, some filled with desperate fighting, others dragged out dully in camp or barracks. The rough, active life hardened John Smith's body and the perils shared with men of many types and nations seasoned and shaped his mind. While he learned the use of weapons, he learned also the worth of training and discipline. They were weapons, too, for they welded men together to stand fast against surprise and shock. When Captain Duxbury paid off his troop after a service of nearly four years, John Smith, at twenty, was a hardy, daring, keen and skilful young soldier.

Should he go home now to Willoughby? Gathering his belongings together in the barracks he came across the packet of letters David Hume had given



him. He sat fingering them for a moment. Why not use this chance to see Scotland? If he could win the notice of King James, it might indeed make his fortune. James was rumoured to be Queen Elizabeth's choice as heir to the English throne. And the winning of fame and fortune, not mere adventure, was now John Smith's goal.

He therefore took passage on a ship bound for Leith in Scotland. Off the Isle of Berwick a storm drove the vessel ashore and wrecked it. John Smith luckily was a strong swimmer, and he was one of the few to reach land alive. Recovered from this ordeal, he journeyed to Edinburgh in search of the friends to whom Hume's letters were addressed. He found them, but they proved to be ordinary tradesmen—pleasant enough folk but without rank or influence at the Court or anywhere else.

"Ah, well, Davie was always the glib talker," they said, when they heard John's story. And that was that.

Back to Lincolnshire then, to be met by the sad news that his mother had died soon after he had left home. His brother and sister received him like a conquering hero, however, while the boys and young men of the village flocked around to hear the tales of his adventures. The girls, too. For their benefit the young soldier put a little extra swing and swagger into his walk and brushed his newly grown moustaches upward in the military fashion set by Henry of Navarre.

Then came the question of the future, and the old restlessness began to stir within him. Settle down here for the rest of his life when the world was so wide and there was still so much of it to see? What of the fame and fortune still waiting to be won?

He would go back to the wars again. But not as a common foot-soldier, he told himself. That was no road to riches. He had enough money now to buy horse and arms, and he would teach himself the use of them. He left the cottage and set up a camp in a neglected pasture surrounded by woods where he could be undisturbed. He would make

himself the best horseman and fighter with lance and sword and pistol possible, he resolved.

For hours every day he practised riding with his lance at a swinging ring target hung from the branch of a tree. He sent to London for books—works on philosophy, the science of war, engineering, ordnance and the making of explosives.

He was hard at his practice one morning when he noticed that another rider had reined his horse under the shade of a tree and was watching him with keen dark eyes.

"If you have a couple of blunted lances, signor, I'd like to try a bout with you," the stranger said, with a markedly foreign accent. "Allow me to introduce myself. I am Theodore Paleologus, Master of Horse to the Earl of Lincoln. I can see that you're skilful, but I fancy myself enough to believe that there are some tricks I could teach you."

In the contest that followed John Smith found himself soundly beaten.

"I'd be as full of holes as a sieve if this were a real battle," he said ruefully.

The Italian wiped his brow with a fine linen handkerchief, then put it carefully away.



"I have taught many of the most famous knights of Europe," he said. "There's no shame in being unseated by my lance, young man. You are a worthy opponent and I must see more of you. Come to Tattershall as my guest and let me find out if I'm right in my judgment—that you have the makings of a champion."

Signor Paleologus was as good as his word. All the time he could spare from his duties in the Earl's service he gave to John Smith. At last a day came when the younger man's lance caught him squarely and knocked him from the saddle to the soft green turf of the tourney ground.

"Are you hurt?" John asked, dismounting hastily and helping him to his feet.

"Hurt? No," the Italian answered. Then his teeth gleamed in his swarthy face. "Although I wish so many of the Earl's guests had not been watching my downfall! But anyway I've proved that I was right. As I predicted, you have become an able and skilful fighter. And now, my boy, there's nothing more that I can teach you."

"They're still at war in the Low Countries," John said as they led their horses back to the stables. "But, to tell you the truth, I have little stomach for that quarrel, where Christians slaughter fellow Christians in the name of religion."

"If I were younger, with your ability and ambition, I'd leave all that behind and ride eastward," Paleologus said. "You'll find Christians of all creeds and nations united there in the struggle against a common foe. The Turks have broken through again and the allies, under the German Emperor, Rudolph, are being pressed hard. They'd welcome any experienced soldier. Promotion should

be swift and booty rich. Their headquarters are at Vienna."

In the early months of the year 1600, therefore, John Smith once more took ship for the Continent. Among his fellow passengers he found four very affable young French gallants. When one of these, Depreau by name, heard where John was bound he opened his eyes in surprise.

"To Vienna! I'm on my way there, also. First, however, I'm stopping off in Brittany to visit my good friend, the Duchess of Mercoeur. Her husband commands the French troops in Hungary and she has promised to give me a letter to him."

The name of Philippe of Lorraine, Duke of Mercoeur, was familiar to every soldier on the Continent. John's face must have showed the eager wish that leaped into his mind.

"Since we are to be comrades-in-arms, come along with us. You're a good-looking rascal. I'll wager she'll help you, too," Depreau continued.

His gay new friends were still laughing and jesting when the ship anchored that night off Valery-sur-Somme. Depreau and his party were the first to be sent ashore in the ship's boat. John's luggage was piled in with theirs, but there was no room for him.

"I dare not overload the boat in this rough water," the coxswain insisted.

"Come on the next trip. We'll wait for you at the inn," Depreau called as the craft pulled away into the windy darkness.

The boat did not return until the next day, and then Smith learned how he had been swindled. His four friends had disappeared and with them all his baggage. One of his chests had contained all his

money and he was therefore forced to sell his good woollen cloak to pay for his passage on the vessel.

"That's a good sword, too," the purchaser said, appraising it shrewdly. "I'll give you enough for it to pay your passage home."

"Home?" John answered. "No. I'll get to the Turkish wars somehow. I still have two good legs. But my sword——" His brows drew together and he touched its hilt. "I shan't sell my sword, for I hope some day to meet those merry gentlemen and I'll have use for it then."

From St. Valery John Smith set out on the long journey to Vienna. His plan was to travel along the coast from port to port until he found a man-of-war heading for the Mediterranean and to enlist as a soldier aboard her. However, now that the religious wars which had torn France were settled, the country seemed full of soldiers looking for employment. He could find no vessel which would take on an Englishman.

"I'm in for a long walk, then," he said to himself. "My legs will serve, but I'll have to tighten my belt."

He fared better than he had expected. In the country districts the people seemed glad to exchange a bowl of soup by the fire and a bed in the stable straw for a tale of adventure or a song from the blue-eyed young soldier. In Brittany his luck turned. He came face to face in a village street with the Count of Ployer, who had been a guest of the Earl of Lincoln during John's stay at Tattershall.

When he heard the young man's story, the nobleman insisted on supplying him with enough money to help him on his way.

"I'm too old to swing a sword for Christendom. Give the heathen a round dozen blows for me and we'll call the account settled."

After that John was able to eat regularly and therefore to enjoy his travels to the full. From Brittany he journeyed south, visiting many great cities on the way. At the port of Marseilles he found a ship loaded with pilgrims bound for Rome and he engaged a place aboard her. Contrary winds hampered them from the start of the voyage. They were forced to put into the harbour of Toulon and as soon as they set out again, the wind changed once more.

"Witchcraft's at work against this ship!" a wild-eyed fellow cried. "There's a Jonah on board."

John saw glances turn his way.

"That young soldier is a foreigner, maybe a heretic," someone shouted.

"He's an Englishman. They are all pirates. Their queen is the arch-enemy of the true religion."

"We'll never reach Holy Rome with him among us. Overboard with him!"

Before John could defend himself, the crowd closed in. He was seized, dragged to the rail and pitched over the side into the sea. The vessel moved on slowly over the glassy swells, leaving him struggling in the water while the passengers jeered and shook their fists in triumph.

The water was warm and after the first confused, choking moments John got his bearings and struck out for a small rocky island he had glimpsed from the ship. It was farther away than he had thought, and when at last he felt ground beneath his feet, he had only strength enough to drag himself up on the beach and fall, spent, on the warm sand. For

the second time in his life he had barely escaped death by drowning.

"God's hand held me up. He must have other plans for me," was his last thought as he sank into a deep, exhausted sleep.

He slept all the rest of that day and through the night, and was wakened by the sun and the cries of sea birds overhead. Sore and dizzy, he got to his feet and looked about. He could see the whole of the island from the top of the nearest rock. The only other inhabitants were a few thin cattle and a flock of goats that were as wild as deer. "If they can live here, there must be fresh water somewhere," he thought. And if the worst came to the worst they would keep him from starving.

All the while he was scanning the surrounding waters for chances of rescue. The French coast was visible, but too distant for swimming. Several sails were in sight. But how could they see him, so tiny a speck on his island in the vast wastes of brilliant blue?

And yet wasn't one of the sails drawing nearer, growing larger as he watched? He pulled off what was left of his white shirt, tied it to a stick, climbed to the highest rock and began to wave his improvised flag.

He hardly dared believe it when he saw the ship slack off, come about and lower its boat in answer to his signal. The ship was French, the captain's name was La Roche, and he came from the port of St. Malo in Brittany. When John mentioned his good friend, the Count of Ployer, La Roche gave an exclamation.

"Why, we're neighbours and friends also. For his sake you're twice welcome."

They were bound with a cargo for Alexandria in Egypt, he explained. Would John try his fortunes with them? They were fighters as well as traders, and picked up many a pretty sum from the cargoes of enemy ships. If not, he would set Smith ashore at his next port of call.

John had liked the Breton captain on sight. He was a stalwart, upstanding fellow. An excellent sailor, surely, for his ship was in first-class trim.

"Instead of wages you'll have a share in our venture," La Roche explained.

This might be a chance to win the money he so much needed for horse and arms, John thought, and consented.

With the next fair wind, they sailed past Corsica and Sardinia, crossed the gulf of Tunis, skirted the African coast and anchored finally in the great harbour of Alexandria. While the ship discharged her cargo and took on another, Smith went ashore with a young shipmate who had visited Egypt before.

Alexandria was under Turkish rule, but the ancient sea-port was a meeting place for every colour, nation and creed. Christians though they were, the two young men moved freely through the narrow streets and bazaars. The bazaars! Shaded by awnings from the burning blue of the Egyptian sky, the colours gathered there seemed to blaze with a fire of their own. While his friend Denis bargained with the merchants, John wandered among the stalls. The sights, the sounds, the fierce heat of the sun, the pungent, spicy, unfamiliar smells all seemed part of some gorgeous and confusing dream.

Denis joined him with a length of silk over his arm.

"The fellow seemed so pleased with the bargain that I suppose I was soundly cheated," he said, puzzling over the coins in his hand. "Well, this should be worth a smile and a kiss from my sweetheart in Nantes."

On the far side of the bazaar a crowd was gathering.

"What is it? You're taller than I. Can you see what they're staring at?" Denis asked.

A striped awning was stretched over a raised platform and from it a bearded man was haranguing the crowd.

"I suppose he's selling something," John said.

Then he felt his breath catch. Two huge natives were dragging a man forward from a group crouched at the back of the platform. Heavy chains clanked as he moved. In spite of the grime and filth that covered him, it was plain that he was fair-skinned and blond. The sickening knowledge dawned. This was a slave market and the slave being auctioned off there before their eyes might be a fellow Englishman!

"I can't stand by and see that!" Smith whispered, feeling blindly for his sword.

But Denis had him by the arm and was pulling him away.

"Don't be a fool. Stir up this crowd and you'll have us both killed without helping that poor wretch at all," he whispered. "It's time we were back on the quay. The boat will be leaving for the ship at sundown."

The two young men were silent as they made their way to the waterside. The sun still beat fiercely on his shoulders, but John Smith shivered as though a cold wind had blown upon him. In his mind he could see the man's haggard, despairing face, turning from the crowd about him up to the sky as though

seeking Heaven's aid. How had he come to this ? Was he a prisoner taken in war, chained like a dog, with an iron collar about his neck ? Better to have died in the heat of battle than live out a life in slavery !





Chapter *three*

THEY left Alexandria on the next fair wind, but the memory of the slave market went with John Smith. It haunted his sleep for weeks while they sailed along the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, trading as they could from port to port. Northward they coasted, then turned west through the fabled islands of the Greek Archipelago, rising golden in the sun out of a sea blue as precious lapis lazuli. Past Crete and the coast of Greece itself and finally to the straits of Otranto, entrance to the Adriatic Sea.

Here they were hailed by a towering Venetian argosy which forbade them to pass through the straits.

"Let them halt us if they can! Trumpeter, sound every man to his charge," Captain La Roche shouted.

The Venetians meant business. They fired on the smaller ship as it swept defiantly past them. La Roche answered first with a full broadside, then with another blast from his stern guns. Coming sharply about, he raked them between wind and water with his other broadside. Sails and rigging torn and hull

blasted by the Breton's accurate fire, the Venetian captain had no choice then but to stand and fight.

"Bear up close and board her on her weather quarter!" La Roche's orders were bellowed by his mate. "Lash fast your grapplings!"

Twice in the first hour of hand-to-hand fighting La Roche got his men aboard the Venetian, twice they were driven off. Once the Breton ship took fire and only desperate work with wet sails quenched the blaze before it reached the powder magazines. But when next the Breton's men swarmed aboard the argosy, John Smith's fierce and skilful sword-play disarmed the Venetian captain. With the Englishman's point at his throat he lost his taste for battle and yielded his ship. Down came the banner of St. Mark while the Breton drums beat and the trumpets sounded triumph. The smoke-blackened, weary men strained their parched throats to cheer.

A rich prize to climax their voyage! They put into Antibes to overhaul their ship, and there the captain divided the worth of the cargo among his men. To John's amazement, his own share amounted to almost four hundred English pounds.

"Sail with me again. It might be a surer way to fortune than fighting the Turks," La Roche suggested.

"True enough," Smith answered. "But remember, there are those dozen blows I promised to strike for Christendom in the name of the good old Count of Ployer."

La Roche laughed. "Keep your promise, boy. Good luck to you and if ever you want to sail with me again, remember that St. Malo is my home port."

Snow had closed the mountain passes into Austria. Smith therefore spent the months that followed travelling at leisure through Italy. His gift for languages served him well again and by spring he was speaking the musical Italian language with some fluency.

He boarded ship at Venice and crossed to Capo d'Istria. The mountain roads were clear, he learned. He hired a guide and some sure-footed mules and struck out over the wild, high alpine country to arrive at last at Gratz in the summer of 1601.

Among the soldiers-of-fortune gathered at Gratz, Smith met Count Ebersbaught, a high-ranking German commander, and Henry Volda, a Transylvanian cavalry colonel. The two officers were about to leave for Vienna where Volda's regiment was quartered. When they learned that Smith planned to enlist, they asked him to travel with them. Although they were natives of three different countries, they all spoke French and the journey was pleasant.

Count Ebersbaught, ramrod-stiff, sat his horse like an iron statue. He was on his way to take command of the garrison of Ober Limbach in Hungary, an outpost threatened by the Turks.

"It's strongly fortified," he said. "I think it could stand a long siege."

"Are there any books on the science of siegecraft that you'd recommend to a beginner, Count Ebersbaught?" Smith asked as they rode side by side through a flowery mountain meadow.

Of the two or three Ebersbaught named, Smith himself had studied one.

"Do you remember the description of the way they signalled into the besieged castle in Poland?"

he asked. "The code worked out at night with torches?"

"Why yes, although my memory is hazy," Ebersbaught answered, giving Smith a look of surprised interest.

When Smith described the details the Count nodded.

"I remember it now. A clever device. I'd use it myself if my communications were ever cut off by besiegers—which God forbid."

Henry Volda was a less impressive figure than the German. He was slight and stooped, with quiet voice and manner. His dark eyes were full of fire, however, and in the saddle he had all the dash and magnetism of the born cavalry leader. By the time they reached Vienna, Smith had made up his mind that this was a man he could follow, and he enlisted under him.

Volda's regiment advanced into the enemy country ahead of the slower supply wagons and foot-soldiers. Their first hint that the Turks were near was the smoke of a burning village blotting the horizon. Then, suddenly, the Moslem horsemen were upon them. They beat them off, but in that first *mêlée* Smith learned how formidable these fierce, wild riders could be in combat.

Cavalry skirmishes grew into full-scale battles as the generals manoeuvred their armies on the fertile plains of Hungary. While the campaign dragged on, the green fields turned to ripe gold. Doggedly the peasants laboured to get in their harvest, as resentful of Christian soldiers who trampled down their grain as of the marauding Turks. They were serfs forever bound to the soil, Smith learned. They neither understood nor shared their masters'

quarrels, but the cold and hungry winter was an enemy they understood only too well.

If accurate news was scanty, rumours were plentiful. The soldiers discussed them, sitting round their cooking fires.

"Caniza has fallen to the Turks."

"The two Archdukes are storming Budapest."

"The Tartar tribesmen are deserting the Turkish armies—that's good news, at least."

"Ober Limbach's surrounded. No word has come from the garrison there for weeks."

"That's where we're bound on this march," a trooper said, crouching closer to the fire. "Baron Kissel, our general, has orders to raise the siege of Ober Limbach."

Smith looked up sharply from the leather boot he was oiling. That was the town whose garrison Count Ebersbaught had been sent to command. Smith jumped to his feet and hurried through the camp to Colonel Volda's tent. When he reminded Volda of the discussion on the road to Vienna, Volda's eyes lighted.

"That code might be useful. You must tell this to the general."

Eagerly Smith explained the code to Baron Kissel.

"The signalling must be done at night, with torches. The alphabet is divided into two parts. A letter in the first half is indicated by signalling with one lighted torch, showing and hiding it for as many times as that letter is numbered from A. The other half of the alphabet, from M on, is indicated by signalling with two torches at a time. The end of a word is shown by three torches at once. If you'll give me a short message I can send it to

Count Ebersbaught. I'm sure he'll recognize the code and translate it."

Baron Kissel stroked his heavy red beard.

"With the Turks outnumbering us as they do, I've hesitated to attack the besiegers until I could arrange for a sally at the same time from inside the city. I've tried to get messengers through to Ebersbaught, but without success. Your idea is worth a try."

That same night, therefore, Smith and a group of picked soldiers climbed a mountain which overlooked the plain of Ober Limbach. Spread below them in the darkness the camp-fires of the rival armies could be seen. Smith's three torches were set up in a row, flint and steel sparked, kindled, and they flared up smokily. The men stared across the valley, waiting for some answering sign from inside the city.

"Their sentinels *must* see these lights," Smith said. "Let's hope they report them to Count Ebersbaught himself, and soon."

"Let us hope they can decipher it before a Turkish patrol comes up the mountain to find out what we're doing," one of the soldiers grumbled. "Look! What's that?"

On the top of the city wall a new light had appeared, another, then another.

"Ebersbaught himself has seen our signals!" Smith cried. "Good man! There's one general who doesn't spend all night abed. Now for the shields to cover the torches and we'll give him Baron Kissel's message."

Slowly the words were spelled out.

"On Thursday at midnight I shall charge on the East gate. At the alarm, make your sally from the opposite side. Kissel."

A pause. Then, deliberately, the answer came back :

“ Message received. Will comply. Ebersbaught.”

In the interval before Thursday's attack, Smith prepared another experiment. He had several thousand bits of slow-match (rope, impregnated with saltpetre) strung on a series of long lines. On the instant of the attack he set them all alight by means of trains of powder. In the darkness they looked like a regiment of musketeers set to discharge their guns. The Turks turned their heavy cannon about to repel the musketeers and General Kissel's charge caught them on their unprotected flank. The sally from the city by the garrison troops completed the Turkish rout. Before the sun was high in the sky, they had begun their retreat towards Caniza. The siege was raised.

And before the week was out John Smith received a promotion. Captain John Smith now, he rode at the head of two hundred and fifty horsemen to attack the strong Turkish fortress of Alba Regalis. Here the young captain again combined his knowledge of the new science of explosives with his native ingenuity.

He collected fifty round-bellied earthen pots from nearby peasants, had them filled with hand gun-powder and covered with pitch mingled with brimstone and turpentine. In each one he packed musket balls partially cut through. The pots were covered tightly first with strong cloth, then with a thickness of slow-match mixed with oil, camphor and powder.

When night came they were loaded into great slings, the covering of slow-match was lighted and they were catapulted, flaming, over the walls into

the fortress. They left terrifying trails of fire in the air and exploded inside the city with destructive violence, starting fires that were almost impossible to quench. Smith was given credit for a large part in the triumph when the city fell at last.

For the rest of that winter the allies could call themselves the victors. Victory brought rest to the exhausted troops, but to their leaders—the Emperor Rudolph, the Archdukes Matthias and Ferdinand, Prince Sigismund Bathory of Transylvania and the Duke of Mercoeur—it brought bitter political quarrels. They could unite against the Turks but, when it came to portioning the spoils, old claims and grievances rose up, ghostlike, to divide them.

Henry Volda, a Transylvanian by birth, was loyal to Bathory. He volunteered to lead an army into the disputed province of Transylvania and to reconquer it from the Turks in his prince's name. To help Volda raise his army Prince Sigismund promoted him to the rank of general and decreed that his soldiers could keep for their own whatever booty they captured from the Turks. That offer brought troops flocking to his standard. By spring Volda had fifteen thousand men under his command. Among them was Captain Smith, leading his mounted troopers.

Volda's first objective was the fortress of Regall which guarded a strategic pass. After a series of encounters, the Turks were driven inside the walls of the town and it was surrounded. Now the besiegers began the heavy task of moving their cannon up within firing range, protecting them all the while by ramparts of earth and logs against the batteries inside the city. It was slow, tedious work.

One morning a messenger appeared at the city gate with a white flag of truce flying above him.

"Can the Turks be surrendering before we've fired a cannon shot?" Smith asked, narrowing his eyes against the sun.

The messenger was escorted to the general's tent.

"I bring a challenge," he announced. "The Lord Turbishaw, our mightiest fighter, will battle any one of your captains in single combat before the city walls. The loser will forfeit his horse, his armour and his head."

Eagerly the young officers demanded the right to meet the bold Turk.

"You must draw lots for the honour," Volda decided.

Lots were cast and Smith found himself the winner. Armed, mounted, with lance at rest he rode out on a level field before the city wall. Now the gate opened and the Turkish challenger appeared in the dark archway. Three turbanned servants, each more gorgeous than the last, walked ahead of him carrying his weapons. The sun flashed on his burnished armour and on the brilliant silks of his trappings.

All along the walls of the city, the Turks yelled and shrieked for their favourite while the Christian army, drawn up on the field below, roared out their defiance. A flourish of trumpets, then silence. At the next signal the horses plunged forward. Faster and faster the hoofbeats drummed on the earth. Smith leaned forward in his saddle, shifted his grip on his lance and spurred his horse to a sudden extra burst of speed.

The fighters met with a deafening clang and shock. Dust boiled up, hiding them from the

spectators. Smith felt his lance drive home, then it was wrenched from his grasp. Blinded by the dust, he wasn't sure where his enemy was until he saw a riderless horse galloping wildly over the plain. He wheeled his own mount and circled back. In all his splendid trappings the Turk lay on the dusty ground, his arms flung wide. Smith's lance had pierced him clean through the body.

Smith swung from the saddle and lifted his visor to peer down at his fallen enemy. It was clear that there was no life in him.

"His head! His head!" roared the crowd.

Smith drew his sword, cut off Turbishaw's head, and lifted it high.

After the first stunned amazement, a yell of fury rose from the Moslems on the city wall. Almost at once a messenger dashed out with another challenge. Groalgo, Turbishaw's friend, demanded the chance for vengeance. Smith accepted this challenge on the same terms as the other.

This time both lances were splintered in the first charge. The duellists then drew their pistols and fired at point-blank range. Once again John Smith won the victory and severed the head of his enemy.

The Turkish ardour for duels seemed cooled by these defeats, but young Captain Smith's blood was up.

"I'll give you one more chance to win back the heads and property of your champions and my head as well. Does no one dare to accept?"

In answer a gigantic and famous Tartar warrior named Mulgro rode out of the city. He had the choice of weapons, since he had been challenged. Instead of the lance, at which Smith had proved so expert, Mulgro chose pistols, battle-axes and swords.

There was some dismay among the Christians. The Tartar looked far more powerful than the young Englishman. If his single pistol shot failed, this swift hour of triumph and glory might well be his last.

He would have to make up in nimbleness what he lacked in weight, Smith told himself. He leaned forward and stroked his horse's arched, glossy neck.

"It's you and I together once more, my friend."

The trumpets pealed. The riders moved forward. Almost in unison came the crack of pistols, but neither man was hit. Throwing down the discharged pistols, they galloped close and the battle-axes rose and fell with the shattering shock and clang of blows on armour. There came an exultant yell from the Turks. Smith's axe had been knocked from his hands.

His friends gasped and groaned aloud, then shouted again. He had pulled his horse up, forcing it to rear wildly and whirl out of reach of Mulgro's axe. In the same instant Smith drew his sword. He circled about the Tartar, dashed fiercely in at his undefended side and drove his blade with all his force through a joint in his enemy's body armour. Smith had won again!

The story of the young officer's deed stirred the whole Christian army, and Smith was promoted to senior captain of his regiment. But still the siege went on. Summer had come before the artillery was brought within range at last and had begun to batter at the defending walls. Long tunnels were then dug to plant mines under each of the city gates. When the army was ready for the final assault, the mines were exploded. Through the gaping holes where

the gates had stood the attackers swarmed into the city.

Prince Sigismund Bathory himself journeyed eastward to review his successful army. When he heard of Captain Smith's duels with the three Turks, he sent for the Englishman. Besides a pension of three hundred gold ducats a year, he bestowed on Smith a handsome shield picturing three Turks' heads, and also a patent, signed with his royal hand and seal, giving Smith the right to use it as his coat-of-arms, and to pass it on to his heirs. The words, *vincere est vivere*, to conquer is to live, were chosen to be his motto.

A coat-of-arms like a gentleman-born? Surely John Smith had travelled far from the thatch-roofed cottage at Willoughby!

There was a new authority in the young captain's bearing as he rode southward into Wallachia on his next campaign. The plunder of Regall had been rich. Smith's share, added to what he had won from the Turkish champions and the Prince's gifts, had made him a wealthy man, and his exploits had made him the hero of the army. He had reached the goals he had set for himself and already he was planning his future. Should he buy land and build himself an estate? Should he invest in ships and send them trading to the four quarters of the globe? Should he buy a place at Court? Or—he smiled at the fantastic thought—should he follow in Raleigh's steps and found a colony in the New World where he could rule as king?

He would finish this campaign, for he felt a loyalty to Henry Volda. After that, however, he would return to England. The quarrel between the Prince and Emperor seemed to him only folly.

"Time enough to divide the country when the Turks are driven out completely," he said to Ensign Carlton, another adventurous young Englishman who rode beside him.

The battle of Pitesti was a victory for the Christians once again, but at the cost of hideous slaughter. Smith had two horses killed under him. He was not hurt, but many of his own troops were left among the dead. Riding over the battlefield, he felt himself weighed down by profound depression. Could any victory be worth this suffering and the sacrifice of so many gallant lives?

But now news came that bands of Tartar stragglers had hidden in the encircling mountains and were raiding the Christian villages. Volda, with eleven thousand men, was sent to hunt them out. Smith rode silent and frowning over the frost-hardened mud of the trampled mountain trail, deeply troubled by a foreboding of disaster.

It had begun when he reported to the general that morning. Volda was sitting in his tent with a dispatch open in his hand. His face was grim.

"It seems"—his voice was hoarse, and he cleared his throat—"it seems that the Emperor and my Prince have made friends again. Transylvania is to be handed over wholly to the Emperor in return for Silesia and some thousands of ducats to balance the bargain. Whatever else was in that bargain I do not know yet, but I have been warned."

Smith waited for him to continue, then spoke diffidently:

"Will this change your plan of campaign, sir?"

The general shook his head.

"No. The Turks are still my enemies although I cannot be so sure who are my friends."

As he walked back through the camp, Smith's anger grew. If Transylvania was now almost freed from the Turks, it was due solely to the skill of Volda. The general had fought because he believed that the Transylvanian Prince, not the German Emperor, should rule in his homeland. How could Bathory ignore his debt and his promises?

Put not your trust in princes—the phrase flashed through Smith's mind. And yet? He had been taught since childhood that princes were set on high by the divine right of royal birth and that their deeds must not be questioned.

On November 18, 1602, they met the enemy in the Pass of Rotheturm—not bands of Tartar stragglers, but a well-equipped army of forty thousand warriors. Somewhere, somehow, the knowledge of the size of this force had been withheld from Volda. Had he been sent out purposely against hopeless odds because he had become an awkward factor in the royal bargains?

Treachery or not, the attack was on and must be met. The Christians were caught in the gorge between the mountains and the river Aluta and their only hope was to fight their way out. At first the narrowness of the pass offset the superior numbers of the Tartars. But slowly their strength told. When night came, Volda led a last, desperate charge and, under cover of the darkness, managed to cut through and swim the river with some fourteen hundred of his horsemen.

Captain John Smith was not among them. He had fought with the rearguard to defend his leader's crossing and was left, wounded and senseless, on the battlefield. He recovered consciousness stripped of his armour and a prisoner. Weak from loss of blood,

he was carried by cart to the nearest town. To his surprise he was given food and his wounds were dressed by a surgeon.

It was a calculated kindness, however. As soon as he had recovered his strength, he was brought to the market place of the town. Like that Christian captive in Alexandria whose fate had so troubled his dreams, John Smith stood on the auction block to be sold as a slave.

Chapter

four



Now came weeks of nightmare. Chained by the neck with twenty other captives, Smith was driven eastward towards Constantinople. He had been bought, he learned, by a Turkish Bashaw named Bogall. He was being sent as a present to a prince's daughter, heiress to a great fortune, whose hand Bogall hoped to win in marriage. Her name was Charatza Tragabigzanda—the strange, barbaric syllables sounded harsh and forbidding to Smith's ears.

Constantinople had once been the capital of the Christian Empire of the East, but now the crowds that filled its streets were Moslems who spat and jeered as the wretched file of prisoners plodded by. Smith was delivered to the slave quarters beneath the flat-roofed marble palace of his new owner. The steward, a Greek, could speak a little French and he seemed a good-humoured man. He ordered the chains filed from Smith's neck, gave him food, allowed him to bathe and handed him a set of clean garments made in the Turkish style.

Then he led him up a winding stair, through many

passages to a flowery inner court. On a cushioned divan sat his new mistress with her maids about her and a tame gazelle curled at her feet. According to Moslem custom, she was veiled. Her clinging silken garments, however, revealed a figure that was young and graceful. While the steward read the message which Bogall had sent with his gift, she listened with bored indifference, feeding sweetmeats to her gazelle all the while. But when her large, long-lashed eyes turned to rest on Smith at last, they widened and lingered. She spoke in Turkish to the steward, who questioned Smith.

"The lady asks what land you have come from. She is a student of foreign tongues and she has been hoping to find a slave who can converse with her in Italian."

"Tell her that I am English, but that I have travelled in Italy and can speak Italian," Smith answered stiffly, resenting the quickening of his pulses under the glance of her dark eyes.

The month that followed was like an exotic dream. At any moment, Smith felt, he would be kicked awake to find himself still chained, sore and exhausted, in his filthy rags. Instead, day after day he was summoned at the same hour to the inner courtyard of the palace where a fountain splashed among green water plants and filled the air with constant music. There Charatza and her fat, black-browed mother, or the old woman who served as her duenna, waited among their cushions, and the conversation would be launched.

Charatza was eagerly curious about the great world she had never seen. The life of a Turkish girl, Smith learned, was confined to her home, the houses of a few close relatives, the public baths or the Moslem



cemetery. She drank in every word Smith could tell her of his homeland and his travels.

Smoothly the hours slid by. Her voice was soft and charming, and through the sheer gauze of her veil Smith could see how red the lips were that formed the lilting Italian syllables. Her veil was far thinner than it had been, he noticed suddenly. Did she realize how plainly he could see through it? It was hardly more than a silken shadow over the lovely contours of her face.

She was telling him of her own life and her family.

"My father died many years ago. I do not remember him," she said. "But I have an older brother. He commands an outpost on the edge of the desert north of the Sea of Azov. When I was a little girl he was kind to me and I loved him dearly. My mother"—she shrugged her shoulders under the little embroidered jacket—"my mother wants me to marry Bogall. I saw him once through the lattice and he is very ugly." She hesitated, her head bent low while she played with the ears of the gazelle. "I have decided that I shan't marry at all until I am of

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age. Then I can choose for myself. I can choose anyone—*anyone* I please.”

Her lashes lifted suddenly and her dark eyes looked into his.

A silence fell between them. It grew every moment more heavily charged with meaning while the fountain splashed and the duenna snored gently. Staring into those velvet-soft eyes, Smith felt himself spellbound. The blood rose pounding in his temples. He leaned forward, laid his hand over her soft, henna-tinted fingers. She did not withdraw them.

“Charatza——” he whispered. And then, hesitating no longer, he took her in his arms.

There was a clatter of tiny hoofs, the gazelle had leaped to its feet. It stood quivering, its ears pointed towards the doorway. The duenna snorted and sat up. Charatza’s bracelets jingled as she drew away.

“Someone is coming,” she breathed.

It was her mother returning from the baths. She gave a sharp glance at Smith’s flushed face, at her daughter, then wheeled furiously upon the duenna.

“Go quickly—come at the same time tomorrow,” Charatza said, and Smith hurried away.

He went through the halls and passages and down the stairs into the slave quarters with his mind afire. What strange turn of fate was this? He had expected nothing from this captivity but misery and death. Yet here he was alive, well, and with what a dazzling prospect opening before him! Never in all his life had he seen loveliness to compare with this Turkish girl’s, nor such magnificence as in this palace.

When night came, he could not sleep. He lay on his straw pallet staring, hot-eyed, into the darkness. How could he, a Christian slave, marry a Moslem princess and live here in the midst of his mortal

enemies? It was too fantastic to believe, he tried to tell himself. Then in his mind he saw Charatza's eyes, dark and soft as the night about him, and his heart raced again.

Steps sounded on the stair and lantern light flashed on the vaulted ceiling. He heard his name spoken and sprang to his feet. It was the steward.

"Come—you're wanted," he said. "Follow me."

Smith followed the swinging lantern through unfamiliar passages. A narrow door stood open to the dark street. The lantern's glow showed a small, muffled figure outlined against the night. Smith's heart gave a jolt of recognition and he stepped forward eagerly.

She drew back and the steward's hand closed hard on his arm. Then Smith saw two men standing in the shadow just outside the door, rough-looking fellows with great gold rings in their ears. Charatza's voice, low and urgent, was stumbling through the Italian words.

"You are in terrible danger," she said. "My mother is planning to have you sold tomorrow. I am not of age yet to rule my own household so I can do nothing, except this. I am sending you to my brother, Tymor of Nalbrits, with a letter asking him to treat you kindly, keep you safe until I shall be of age and, in the meantime, teach you our true Moslem faith and the customs of a Turk. These men will take you there. Their ship is sailing tonight. Farewell——" Her voice broke, then hurried on: "Farewell—and do not forget me, English Captain!"

Then she was gone as softly as her own shadow, leaving nothing but her perfume on the air and the faint, musical ring of her silver anklets echoing behind her. While Smith was still trying to gather his

stunned wits, the steward gave his arm a little shake.

"Go—go with these fellows," he said. "Hurry, or it will cost us both our heads. And if you *do* return here as master, Englishman, remember how I helped you."

Smith stepped over the threshold and into the street while the steward spoke briefly in Turkish with the two seamen. There was a clink of coins, the palace door shut behind him and the three moved off through the dark, empty streets towards the waterfront.

They were no sooner aboard the small vessel than it put off from the quay. Smith peered through the darkness at the vast, shadowy, sleeping city he was leaving behind. Somewhere in that dim mass stood Charatza's palace. Was she looking from some high balcony out over the water? Did this same night wind move against her cheeks? He had seen her face only through the folds of her veil, he remembered; had only once, and so briefly, touched her.

How little he knew her except that she was beautiful and had been kind to him. Her last hurried words echoed in his ears. "I am sending you to my brother, Tymor of Nalbrits——" He had no idea where Nalbrits was or how long this journey would take. "Until I shall be of age——" When would that be? "I am asking him to treat you kindly, to teach you our true Moslem faith——"

Smith gave a start and a shiver, and found himself gripping the wooden rail of the vessel. The palms of his hands were wet with sweat, for the meaning of those words had dawned on him at last.

She expected him to forswear his own religion, to become a renegade, a traitor? He, a soldier pledged to fight for the Christian cause? He drew the fresh,

damp sea breeze deeply into his lungs. He had breathed the perfumed air of that palace too long. It had clogged his thinking. To be a slave was a horror, but this other bondage would be far worse. No, not for the loveliest black eyes in all the world. If he could have his Turkish princess only on those terms, why then, farewell, Charatza ! He would set his mind on a way to escape, think and plan day and night, never despair, never give up until he was a free man once again. The place he had vowed to make for himself in the world was not a slave's. Nor was it that of a renegade Christian, bound by silken fetters inside a Turkish palace !

From the beginning of the voyage Smith made use of his time to learn where he was going and what he could of the language. His eagerness to talk with them seemed to flatter and please the sailors. Most of them were Arabs, as much at home on the trackless wastes of the sea as on their desert.

"We follow the stars in either place. The stars are always our friends," one of them told Smith.

They landed at last at Cambia, a Turkish fortress town at the mouth of a wide river. From there they took horses and rode across barren, desolate country uninhabited except for wandering tribes of Tartars.

Smith had met the Tartar warriors in battle, but now he was seeing them at home in their own country. With his two guards he stayed overnight in one of the Tartar encampments. Their houses were, in fact, tents built upon carts in which they followed their vast herds about the land, tents made of heavy felt treated with tallow to keep out the rain. Some had been rubbed with white clay or bone ashes until they shone like snow ; others, of black felt, were painted with brilliant designs of vines, trees, birds

and beasts and adorned with feathers. It was a strange sight to see fifty to a hundred of these great carts moving slowly over the rolling, treeless plain drawn by ten or a dozen oxen and surrounded by an ocean of sheep, cattle, camels and horses.

After two days of travel they arrived at Nalbrits. Tymor, the Turkish commander, was garrisoned in a stone castle surrounded by courts and massive walls. Smith's practised eye took in the strength of the fortress and his heart failed a little as the gates swung heavily shut behind him. When Smith was brought before him, Tymor was holding Charatza's letter in his hand and his face was distorted with rage.

"So—I am to treat you kindly, teach you how to be a Turk, keep you safe until she is of age. Does the silly girl think I can't see through her words? By the time I've finished with you, she won't find you so handsome!"

He shouted orders. Smith's clothes were stripped from him, his hair and beard shaved close, an iron ring was riveted about his neck and a meagre garment of hairy goatskin given him to wear.

"Take him out to my farm, put him to work at whatever is heaviest and beat any skill he needs into him," Tymor said.

The farm to which Smith was sent was about four miles from the fortress. There he was set to work with a gang of other slaves. Overseers stood over them with whips, driving them on like animals. The food was scanty and revolting; only his resolution to stay alive and escape made it possible for Smith to choke it down.

"Escape?" The other slaves shook their heads hopelessly. "The desert is all about us and to escape there means death by starvation and thirst,

or, worse, at the hands of the Tartars. Friends might ransom you, perhaps——”

Smith knew that there was no chance of ransom for him. Even Charatza, if she knew his plight, could not aid him now. If she should try, it would only bring her brother's wrath more heavily upon Smith. His hope of escape remained with him, nevertheless. Some time, somehow, his chance would come, and when it came he would be ready. Through all the filth, abuse, exhaustion and hunger, that resolution burned within him. God's hand had saved him many times before this. If He willed it, He could again, he told himself, feeling once more that the work he must do in the world was still waiting to be done. Until that time he could and would endure.

Spring turned to summer. The grain ripened, was cut and brought into barns to be threshed. Smith was labouring at this task one afternoon all alone among the dusty echoes of a high-roofed barn when Tymor himself dismounted before the door. He had halted his inspection to look for Smith, for he always singled him out for special mockery.

“So here you are,” he said. “Down, dog! Rub your nose in the dirt before your master.”

He drew his wide, curved sword and caught his captive a painful blow across his bare shoulders with the flat of it. Smith's temper flared. He had a weapon in his own hands, the heavy threshing bat. He swung it with sudden, desperate strength and Tymor fell dead at his feet on the threshing floor.

For a single instant John Smith stood staring at what he had done. Then something flashed like an explosion in his mind and now it was clear again. *His chance had come.*

He dropped to his knees beside the lifeless Turk, stripped his fine clothes from him and put them on his own filthy, sweating body. He dragged the corpse aside and hid it under the straw, filled a bag with the newly threshed grain, mounted Tymor's waiting horse and galloped off into the desert.

He rode due north until his horse began to tire, then halted briefly beside a pool of brackish water in a river bed. On the horizon he saw a band of Tartars with their flocks and wagons. Remembering that the iron ring, still about his neck, would betray him as a runaway slave, he kept his distance from them. When his horse had rested, he watered it, fed it from his bag of grain and chewed some of the wheat himself. Then he spurred on. He must put all the miles he could between himself and the Turkish outpost before his flight was discovered.

After several days' hard riding he came to a caravan trail. One of his fellow prisoners had told him of a highway, or *castragan*, from the Caspian Sea to the river Don. This must be it. He followed the barely visible track westwards across the empty desert, meeting no other human being in all that journey.

It was sixteen days before he reached an outpost of Christian Russians on the river Don. His food had run out, his horse was barely able to travel and Smith himself was lightheaded from hunger and fatigue. At first, the trees, the river and the settlement of log houses seemed mirages to him. The kindness of the Russians was real enough, however. The hateful iron collar was filed from his neck and he was welcomed with food and rest.

By the time the next convoyed caravan started westward, Smith had recovered enough to go with

it. Count Boris, the commander, and his wife, the Lady Callamata, supplied him with letters of safe-conduct and clothing. Together with his good-humoured Russian guides, Smith travelled for many weeks.

He wondered continually at the vastness of the land, the endless miles of evergreen forests through which the trail lay and the sparseness of the population in this seemingly fertile region. The widely scattered villages were built of logs and earth, and the people who lived in them were almost primitive. The lords of the land and the commanders of the garrisons, however, dressed richly and loaded themselves with furs and jewels. Their homes were well furnished and their stables full of fine, spirited horses. These Russians were all either slaves or lords, Smith decided. Nothing between. No sturdy yeomen or artisans. No wonder they were subject to every invasion. Slaves never fought for their land as freemen would.

Arrived at last in Transylvania, Smith was overjoyed to hear that Henry Volda had escaped the disaster at Rotheturm. He was sharing Bathory's exile in Leipsic together with many men from Smith's own troop. He would go there, he decided, and see his old comrades before he returned to England.

He reached Leipsic early in the December of 1603 and was saddened to find Volda aged and broken. Prince Sigismund, living in elaborate state in spite of his exile, received Smith very graciously. He remembered the Englishman's victory over the three Turkish champions.

"We must do something for this gallant officer to repair his losses," he said to Farnese, his Italian secretary.

When Smith resumed his journey, therefore, he carried with him over fifteen hundred ducats of gold, a parchment containing his patent-of-arms and a safe-conduct. Both documents were signed with Bathory's own great seal. The Prince urged him also to accept a place at his court, but a longing to see his own home and his own people made Smith refuse.

Travelling on through Germany, Smith visited many famous old cities and universities. Then into France, down the river Loire to Angers and thence to Nantes in Brittany. Here he inquired for a ship to take him to England. As it chanced, a fine vessel was about to sail with the next tide to Spain, and John Smith suddenly resolved to see one more country before he settled down for good.

There was now a truce between England and Spain, and he wandered freely through the country. He reached Gibraltar at last, and from there Africa was so near that he could not resist crossing the famous straits. At Saffi Captain Merhan, commander of an English vessel, invited Smith to dinner aboard his ship riding at anchor in the harbour. Merhan's hospitality was lavish and it lasted so late that his guest was persuaded to spend the rest of the night on board.

Before dawn a storm arose. The vessel was forced to slip cable and put out to sea, and it was driven before the gale as far as the Canary Islands.

"Well, since we're out here, we might as well look over the prospects," Merhan said cheerfully.

They halted a few Spanish vessels and took their cargoes but almost had the tables turned when two Spanish men-of-war appeared suddenly out of the haze and offered battle. Merhan managed to beat

the Spaniards off after a desperate day-long fight in which all three ships suffered crippling hurts.

Merhan then sailed his ship back for repairs to Saffi, where Smith found an English merchantman bound for home. He took passage aboard her and for once his voyage was uneventful. The sea was calm, the wind fair, they met no hostile ships and, after an absence of four years, Captain John Smith stepped on England's shores again.



Chapter *five*

THROUGH all the bitter time of his captivity, John Smith had dreamed of his Lincolnshire home. Now he was there at last. Surely it had changed. He looked about him, trying to recapture the picture he had carried in his thoughts. Were the fields always so flat and monotonous, the thatch-roofed cottage so small and dim and smoky? Did his brother and sister ever speak or think of anything beyond the nearest market-town?

There were rosy-cheeked girls in Willoughby and there were also fine ladies at Eresby Hall who looked kindly on the young soldier-of-fortune and the riches he had won. But the image of Charatza was still vivid in his memory. Compared with her fluid, silken grace the country girls were coarse and clumsy, the fine ladies stiff as dolls in their farthingales and paint. Restless again, he journeyed up to London.

If Willoughby had seemed stagnant, London was seething with change. First of all, Elizabeth, the great queen, was dead. In her place now ruled James I. Many who had risen to high places by Elizabeth's favour were now brought low. Among

them was the many-talented adventurer, Sir Walter Raleigh. He had been tried and convicted of treason and was now imprisoned in the Tower of London.

This news was shattering to Smith, who had ranked Raleigh as a true hero. From the landlord of his waterside tavern in Billingsgate, Smith learned the reason for Raleigh's downfall.

"Raleigh'll pay with his head before the King's through with him," his host said, scowling over the dark polished wood of the counter. "And why? Because it's a crime now to offend the murdering Spaniards. A crime, and Francis Drake was knighted for just that by Queen Bess's own hand—God rest her soul!"

"Tell me, did Raleigh ever colonize again in the Americas, in Virginia, as he called it?" Smith asked. "I've been away and I'm starved for news. Were the lost Roanoke colonists ever found? Or have other Englishmen settled there?"

The man shook his head.

"No, but there's been ships aplenty fishing along the Virginia coast. And look. Here comes someone who made a voyage there only last summer. Welcome, Captain Bartholomew Gosnold, sir. This young gentleman was asking about Virginia."

Smith got hastily to his feet to acknowledge the introduction. Gosnold was a spare man with a cool, alert glance. When he learned that Smith's interest was sincere, his manner warmed at once. Soon he was leaning across a table tracing a crude map on a bit of paper and answering Smith's questions in careful detail.

The candle burned low. The food stood scarcely tasted before them. Under the spell of Gosnold's

ardour Smith began to catch fire. Win a place in the New World for England ! To Smith's bold and restless mind the vastness of the vision was like fresh wind filling his lungs. He felt his heart begin to pound.

" France, Spain, Portugal, they all have flourishing colonies there," Gosnold said. " Why not England, too ? Some have failed, but others can learn from their mistakes. I tell you, Captain Smith, Raleigh's Virginia is as fair a land as any part of England, and it's waiting there like a ripe peach for the first hand to reach out and pluck it."

" But Raleigh's in the Tower," Smith began.

Gosnold's face darkened.

" I, for one, pray that God may soften the King's heart. Raleigh has brought too much glory to England to come to so sorry an end. Yes," he continued, " the patents for colonization in Virginia were in Raleigh's name and they're now forfeited to the Crown, like all his property. But patents can be issued again. Since I returned from my voyage to the Virginia coast, I've found many men, some of them in high positions, who are eager to take up Raleigh's work where he was forced to drop it. Sir Thomas Gates, Sir George Somers, Sir Ferdinando Gorges, Master Richard Hakluyt, the geographer—a most learned man. How about you, young captain ? You've travelled in many countries. Doesn't the thought of that unknown land across the Western Ocean stir your adventurer's blood ? "

" Indeed it does, Captain Gosnold," Smith assured him. " You've made a convert of me already. You say that letters patent can be issued again. How long a process is that ? "

Gosnold frowned.

"It's hard to know. A year at the least, perhaps more."

"So long as that?" Smith's eager look faded. "And meantime suppose the French or Portuguese or Spaniards decide to pluck that ripe peach, as you called it?"

Gosnold shrugged.

"That thought is with me night and day. Only a man of influence and fortune such as Raleigh had could move swiftly. But where shall we find another like him?"

They both fell silent while the candles guttered, thinking of the fabulous, dazzling, splendid figure now brought to such depths. The tavern host, napkin over his arm, appeared beside the table.

"May I serve your honours with something else?" he asked.

"No, thank you." Gosnold pushed back his chair. "It's late and I must return to my lodgings." He held out his hand to Smith. "I hope that we may meet again, sir?"

Smith grasped the thin, firm hand warmly.

"I shall make sure that we do, Captain Gosnold," he said.

Gosnold's prediction that it would take time to secure the letters patent proved only too true. Impatient at the delays, Smith decided to throw in his lot with another expedition. A settlement had already been planted, under a Captain Ley, in South America, on the river Oyapok. Before Smith could join them, however, Captain Ley's death discouraged the other colonists. They abandoned their project and returned home.

Balked from that enterprise, Smith decided to work off his urge to travel by visiting Ireland.

"But the Irish hate all Englishmen," his friends protested. "You'll get your throat cut at the first inn where you find lodgings."

Smith went, nevertheless, travelling on foot and poorly clad, and the Irish peasants welcomed him to their hearthsides and shared their scanty food with a warm courtesy that charmed and touched him.

He returned to England to find that Master Richard Hakluyt, famous geographer and Prebendary of Westminster, had taken up Gosnold's cause and brought it to success. A company had been formed, stock sold and funds raised to finance the new colony in Virginia, and the King had promised his permission. Smith bought shares in the company, investing five hundred hard-earned pounds, and prepared to go out with the first ship that should sail.

After endless quibblings over every smallest detail, King James finally granted letters patent and a Charter to the Royal Virginia Company on April 10, 1606. Its bounds in the New World reached from the 34th to the 44th Parallel. This land was divided equally between the Company's investors in London and those in the west of England, whose headquarters were Plymouth. The Londoners controlled the southern half of Virginia, Plymouth the northern.

Now that it had official standing, the Virginia enterprise became the talk and rage of London. Young gallants flocked to the waterside taverns to hear sea captains tell of the land across the Western Ocean where Spain had harvested such riches. Virginia became the subject of plays on the stage and broadside ballads hawked up and down the streets. Master Michael Drayton, the famous poet, wrote

verses celebrating the Virginia voyage in which he urged the adventurers on—

*To get the pearl and gold,
And ours to hold
VIRGINIA,
Earth's only paradise !*

It took the remainder of that year to gather supplies, charter three good vessels and enlist the new colonists. It was not easy to persuade sober, responsible men to make the dangerous voyage and risk their lives in the wilderness. But of hot-blooded, adventurous youths, bankrupt gallants and feckless fellows whose friends wished them elsewhere there were more than plenty. They made up most of the hundred and five who finally signed to join the expedition. Watching them come aboard the anchored vessels, Smith felt a stirring of doubt in his mind. These men were to be his comrades in this assault upon the giant wilderness, and to his practised soldier's eye they seemed poor stuff for such a battle.

He glanced along the ship's rail. Master Robert Hunt, the chaplain sent by Master Hakluyt to hold the first "living" in Virginia, looked devout enough, but surely he was fragile in health. Master Gabriel Archer, fussing over his chest and boxes, had been introduced as a learned man and a lawyer. Of what use was a lawyer in a land still peopled with savages? Archer's friend, John Martin, had an unwholesome, bilious look to him—another lawyer?

As for that long-faced, swarthy fellow, George Kendall, there was something fierce and reckless in his glance. It reminded Smith of a bad horse he once owned which had turned and tried to trample him without cause.

The tall, sober-eyed young man with the mastiff at his heels was Master George Percy, brother of the Earl of Northumberland who had offended the King and was now a prisoner in the Tower. He, at least, bore a great fighting name, for what it was worth.

More than half the others described themselves simply as "gentlemen." A few had had experience in the wars of the Low Countries. From the whiteness of their hands, they had never worked at anything else, and some had even brought their valets to wait upon them. Of the rest four were carpenters, eight artisans of various trades, and a few young boys made up the total.

Smith smiled and shook his head, trying to make light of his misgivings. Time would prove them, he thought. Who knew how Cortez and Pizarro felt when they first looked over their comrades? And what a few Spaniards could do, Englishmen could do as well! Of that he hadn't the least doubt in the world.

On a bright day sparkling with frost, Saturday, December 20, 1606, the three ships left the Blackwall in London and dropped down the Thames, Virginia-bound. Captain Christopher Newport, a veteran mariner who had sailed for Raleigh, commanded the expedition aboard the *Susan Constant*, a ship of one hundred tons. A smaller vessel, the *Godspeed*, sailed with Captain Gosnold as master, while a pinnace of twenty tons was under John Ratcliffe.

Aboard Captain Newport's vessel was a sealed box containing the names of those appointed by His Majesty to serve as the colony's first governing council. In it was also a list of rules for their conduct in this new land written down by Master

Richard Hakluyt in his study at Westminster. It was not to be opened until they landed in Virginia.

“Like Pandora’s box in the old tale,” Smith commented. “Let’s hope it won’t let loose such troubles among us as hers did.”

“If you will recall, Captain—er—Smith, those troubles came upon her only because she opened the box without due authority.”

The voice was that of Edward Maria Wingfield—a thin, reedy voice to come from so stout a figure. Master Wingfield of Stonely Priory was a man of vast fortune and ancient family. Queen Mary Tudor herself had stood sponsor at his christening, he was related by blood and marriage to some of the greatest nobles in England.

“Of course, you’re right, Master Wingfield,” Smith said good-humouredly. “Like most figures of speech the likeness fails when it’s examined.”

“Therefore it is well to avoid such idle observations, my good fellow, especially when they question the acts of those in authority,” Wingfield said, with such a grave and pompous air that Smith thought he must be jesting.

But no. His large, pale face was earnest and severe. He did not wait for Smith to reply but moved down the ship’s cluttered deck with his richly embroidered cape swinging behind him.

Smith felt a flush of anger rising along his cheekbones. He clapped his hand to his sword hilt, and started after Wingfield to give him a rough answer when he felt a hand on his arm. Master Hunt was smiling and shaking his head.

“It’s too small a thing to take so hard, Captain,” he said. “There’ll be many such pinpricks passed among us on this long voyage and if we reply to

them with sword thrusts, it will be the ruin of us all."

Smith's frown relaxed and he smiled a bit shamefacedly.

"I can foresee that there'll be more use for a parson as peacemaker than I thought when I saw you come aboard," he said.

Contrary winds held the three vessels riding at anchor in the Downs off the east coast of Kent for six long weeks. After the excitement of departure from London, to be kept within sight of the English coast, consuming supplies, yet getting nowhere, tried all tempers. Many suffered from seasickness, Master Hunt so severely that it seemed as though he could not survive. His spirits never failed, however, and his example of cheerful patience heartened the rest, even those who wished in their misery to give up the voyage, begging to be sent ashore.

Early in February the wind changed. They set sail, steering southward. At the Canary Islands, where Smith had touched on his unexpected voyage with Merhan, they took on fresh water. Then at last the bows of the vessels turned westward. They were headed for the New World that waited for them beyond the clean rim of the horizon.

Now the fact that they were finally under way and steering for Virginia lifted spirits high. Morning, noon and night, talk never ceased about this land to which they were bound. Smith joined a group gathered about the water cask late one evening.

"A sailor told me that he had seen, with his own eyes, cities in Virginia where the people ate from basins of pure gold," one of the young gallants was saying. "He said that the girls have hair like black silk and skins like copper pennies, and that they

dress as our Mother Eve did, in garlands of bright flowers ! ”

His eyes gleamed in the light of the ship's lantern that hung above his head.

“ Well, *I* shall spend only time enough in Virginia to gather a supply of gold. Then I shall travel on through the passage which opens into the Pacific Ocean and encompass the world, like Drake and Cavendish,” another said.

“ As soon as we're settled and have tamed the Red Indians, we can learn from them where the Roanoke colonists are living now. It would be courteous to ask them to join forces with us,” a third suggested.

“ My hope is to convert these poor savage souls.” Smith recognized Master Hunt's voice. “ I could weep for pity of their plight.”

George Kendall cleared his throat.

“ From what I've heard, the savages are very stubborn heathen—some of them cannibals,” he said.

“ We may need our tears for ourselves. If we meet any Spanish ships-of-war, for instance. Or if the Spaniards attack us on land. Remember what they did to the French colonists in Florida ? ”

For a moment silence hung heavy, while the unceasing wash of the sea against the vessel's sides and the wind in the sails and rigging grew loud. The lantern light played over faces suddenly blank with dismay.

One of the young boys who had been listening at the edge of the crowd gave a noisy gulp and glanced so fearfully into the shadows behind him that Smith laid a hand on his shoulder.

“ Why, what are Spaniards ? Not devils, surely, but men like ourselves,” he said. “ Captain Newport is a match for any Don afloat, and as for fighting

them ashore, aren't there plenty of us here who met them in the Low Countries? Yes, and beat them roundly."

There was a rough cheer from the surrounding darkness and a voice with a strong Lincolnshire accent called out:

"That's the spirit, Captain. If you'll lead us, we'll make short work of any of the Dons that show their faces!"

"You have a following already, Captain Smith."

It was Kendall who spoke. He stood leaning on the back of the chair where Master Wingfield sat a little apart from the rest with his furred cloak wrapped around him against the chilly wind. And Wingfield's high, querulous voice added:

"Until a certain box has been opened any talk of leadership is quite out of place, *quite* out of place!"

Once again Smith felt himself flushing with anger. He turned away and strode down the deck, unable to trust his temper within sound of that supercilious voice.

There was a patter of bare feet behind him and the boy who had been frightened by the talk of Spaniards, Sam Collier, appeared at his side. His small face was a pale blur in the darkness.

"Captain Smith, sir," he asked breathlessly.

"Yes, what is it?"

"Sir—your—honour—Captain——"

"Well, out with it, boy!" Smith spoke impatiently.

"I was wondering, Captain—do you need a page, sir? I'm small, but I'm quick!"

The boy's voice was so earnest and his upturned face so pleading that Smith's frown cleared.

"Why, perhaps I could keep you out of mischief.

I need a handy fellow to pull off my boots o' nights, and that shall be your first duty. Come along, for I'm ready for sleep."

The next morning the weather turned suddenly hot and the wind slackened: the vessels barely moved over the glassy swells. Almost at once the temperatures of the passengers rose, also. Close quarters rubbed edgy tempers; quarrels flared over trifles and words spoken hastily turned sour and bitter. The heat began to spoil the food, and the water, scanty at best, grew foul and brackish.

Master Hunt did what he could to keep the peace but with indifferent success. The party was constantly dividing into cliques and factions, which in their own turn found reasons to split apart. To while away the tedious, dragging hours, the men fell to spinning tales to one another. The true stories Smith could tell of his adventures by land and sea were soon found to be far more enthralling than any literary fable. He always had a ring of eager listeners whenever he began.

To his surprise he discovered that he was fast becoming the popular idol of the soldiers and commoners aboard the vessel. They admired him for his rise to fortune in foreign lands—he, born a tenant-farmer's son, no better than themselves!

That fact, Smith now discovered, was rousing enmity and suspicion in many of the gentlemen of the party. He was not one of them. The honours he had won, the effort and money he had put into this colonizing enterprise were as nothing beside the unchangeable and unforgivable fact of his humble birth.

Rumours fed by jealousy flew about the ship. Sam Collier relayed them indignantly to Smith.

“ Master Wingfield—Master *Windbag*, I call him—said ‘ A man who has raised himself so far above his natural station in life must be suspect.’ Yes, and then George Kendall said : ‘ He seems bent on gaining a following among the common fellows. He will bear watching.’ And Master Archer said : ‘ Yes, I remember how he scoffed and made a jest of the box given us by the Royal Commissioners. Next he will be scoffing at the Crown itself !’ Oh, Captain, I know they’re plotting harm to you !”

“ It’s the weather,” Smith told him. “ Give us a fair wind and these quarrels will blow away with it.”

Smith believed his own words, but as the days passed into weeks the hints and rumours grew more malicious. Anas Todkill, a stalwart young veteran of the Low Countries and a Lincolnshire man also, warned him that a committee had gone to Captain Newport demanding that Smith be arrested and tried for mutiny.

“ Captain Newport laughed in their faces and sent them packing,” Todkill said, “ but that has made them angrier than ever. Keep your sword and dagger by you, even at night, Captain.”

Smith stood frowning down at the ship’s lazily moving wake. It was difficult for him to admit that his own countrymen, his comrades in this enterprise, should bear him such unfounded malice. But he couldn’t doubt young Sam’s or Todkill’s honesty.

“ I’ll look out for myself,” he promised.

And now, at last, the wind changed and the sails filled bravely once again. By March 23 they had sighted the West Indies, and the next day anchored at the Island of Dominica.

“ A very fair Island of trees, full of sweet and

good smells," wrote George Percy carefully in his journal.

It had seemed to be uninhabited, but soon canoes full of natives came clustering about the ships to exchange exotic and delicious fruits for the knives, beads and copper trinkets the white men had brought to trade. The Indians' naked bodies were painted red and tattooed in weird designs. Their hair was braided and hung to their waists and they wore rings in their ears, noses and lips. For all their hideous look they seemed friendly. A few could talk enough English to make it understood that they hated the Spaniards but loved the English dearly. A short time ago soldiers from a Spanish ship had landed and slaughtered a great many of them.

"They may seem friendly, but they are cannibals," Captain Newport explained. "As I heard the story, a Spanish ship was wrecked on their island and the poor survivors were slain and eaten by the natives. No wonder the Dons took revenge!"

The vessels continued the next day, coasting with slackened sail past many small islets—Guadeloupe, Monserrat, St. Christopher's—to the Island of Nevis. Here Newport made a landing and set up camp near some hot mineral springs. After the long voyage Smith found them infinitely refreshing to relieve the stiffness of an old wound.

All alone, stretched out lazily in one of the smaller pools one morning, Smith was startled by the sudden arrival of Sam Collier.

"Captain Smith!" Sam gasped. "They're coming! They're coming to arrest you!"

Smith heaved himself up out of the water, splashing half of it over the rocks.

"What a time they've chosen, the cunning

rogues!" he sputtered. His body still wet, he struggled into his shirt and breeches. "Now my boots and my sword belt. Just in time—thanks to you, boy."

As he spoke, Kendall and Archer appeared. The sight of Smith erect with his hand on his sword hilt stopped them abruptly and Archer's mouth fell open.

"Well, gentlemen. Were you in search of me?" Smith asked, giving the damp ends of his moustaches an upward twist.

Archer darted a venomous look at Sam Collier, then drew a paper from his pocket.

"I have here a warrant for your arrest, Captain Smith," he said.

"A warrant? Who has authority to sign a warrant?" Smith asked.

George Kendall stepped forward.

"We didn't come here to argue with you, but to fetch you back to camp as our prisoner. There's something waiting for you there that will end your impudence once and for all."

"Something for *me*?" Smith said. "I'll come back with you to camp, but I'll thank you gentlemen to walk ahead of me."

There was a rasp and flash and his sword was in his hand. In the brilliant sunshine the long blade flickered like pale fire.

Archer and Kendall both wore swords, but they made no move to draw them. Instead they faced about and hurried back along the path, neither anxious to walk within reach of Smith's weapon. They reached the beach, where the tents were set, short of breath and crimson with anger.

All the colonists and most of the sailors from the

ships were gathered there, waiting. As the three men appeared with Sam Collier trotting behind there was some laughter, at which Archer and Kendall looked more furious than ever. Captain Newport, frowning and fingering his beard, had his ship's officers about him. A close knot of Smith's chief enemies was gathered behind Master Wingfield. The rest of the company stood ranged between. Dangling down from a high tree was a long rope with a noose in it, and below it a scaffold had been fashioned of planks and barrels from the ship.

Wingfield moved forward with his air of assured, righteous dignity.

"Captain Smith, your ambitious plottings have come to light," he said. "We have resolved to put an end to them once and for all."

"Shall I read the sentence?" Archer asked, unfolding another paper.

But Smith interrupted him.

"First you try to arrest me without a valid warrant and now to sentence me without a trial. And you, supposed to be a lawyer! What fantastic nonsense is this?"

Wingfield's heavy face, no longer pale, was mottled with red.

"Fantastic nonsense? Save your impudent breath to use when you're dancing on the rope's end. We have learned of your plot to seize power and set yourself up as ruler. Mutiny it is and mutiny must be stamped out the instant it appears. We need no court of law for that. We know our duties. Yield yourself. Submit to just punishment, I charge you."

Smith looked about. From Wingfield's faction, fear, jealousy and hatred glared back at him, and

all stood fully armed. The other gentlemen, George Percy, Master Hunt and Captain Gosnold among them, seemed less than convinced and profoundly troubled. As for the soldiers and artisans near Anas Todkill, they glowered across the open space at Smith's accuser like dogs held at leash. Some of these carried clubs and staves and each had at least one heavy knife or dagger stuck in his belt.

Smith hadn't the least intention of yielding himself to die by a hangman's noose. If they tried to take him by force he would defend himself. He knew, also, that Todkill and his friends, would rally to his aid if it came to that. But what would happen then? Blows, bloodshed and lasting enmity that might ruin all hope of colonizing Virginia before they so much as touched her soil. He must find another way.

"No, I'll not yield to you." He spoke quietly but with a deliberate, chilly threat in his voice. "I demand a trial. To refuse me that is to admit that the charges won't bear the light of day. I assure you, Master Archer, that no lawyer's rhetoric can persuade me to use that gallows. Unless someone has an argument as sharp as this here in my hand?" He tapped the point of his sword lightly on the dusty ground.

The other swords remained sheathed and, after a moment's pause, Smith continued:

"Until our Council is set up, the only authority here is Captain Newport's. I'll yield my sword and myself to him. I'm confident he'll see that I'm given a fair trial by English law." And he held out his sword, hilt foremost, to Newport.

A murmur which swelled into a shout went up from the assembled men—a cheer and a sigh of

relief all in one, as each man realized how close they had come to violence. Wingfield, Archer and Kendall were suddenly left with only a few of their closest cronies.

"Good for you, boy." Gosnold pressed Smith's hand warmly. "You hit on a sane solution. Wingfield is a power in the London Company and Newport has orders to treat him with all respect. But he'll give you a chance to clear yourself—you may count on that."

Smith demanded that he be given his trial at once, but his accusers were now far less keen to confront him in court than they had been to see him hanged without a trial.

"Perhaps it would be best to wait until we reach Virginia and our Governing Council is installed," Captain Newport suggested, trying to conciliate both factions. "In the meantime Captain Smith will remain in my custody."

So it was arranged. Smith fumed at being held a prisoner without trial, but he had promised to abide by Newport's decision. He was deprived of his weapons, kept aboard ship until they sailed again and confined to Captain Newport's cabin.

The vessels left Nevis the 3rd of April and sailed past many islands. By the time they reached Mona on April 6, the water they had taken on at Nevis had developed a nauseating smell and it was necessary to empty and clean out all the water casks, then refill them.

While the sailors worked at this task, a group of gentlemen went ashore, but Smith, still a prisoner, was not permitted to go with them. They returned with tragic news. The heat and the exertion of climbing over some sharp rocks had proved too

much for one of their number, Master Edward Brookes. He had fallen in a faint and died before anyone could help him.

On April 10, they left the West Indies behind and turned north. For ten days they sailed without sight of land.

"We're three days past our reckoning," Newport told Smith.

The ships drew together so that the three Masters could confer. Ratcliffe, who commanded the pinnace, looked gloomy as he climbed the ladder up the ship's side from his tossing boat.

"We've mistaken our position, and Heaven alone knows where we are. Turn back to England now while we still have provision, and before we find ourselves deep in Spanish waters."

"Give up our venture—return home beaten?" Captain Gosnold cried. "Never!"

Although Newport looked grave, he shook his head.

"No, Master Ratcliffe. We'll take soundings again in the morning. I'm convinced that it's only a matter of a few score miles more. We'd be utter fools to yield now after coming so far. We'll go on."

But before evening a violent storm had risen. The sails were reefed close; nevertheless the ships were driven forward under bare poles all that night and most of the next day. When the sky cleared and the sun rose on the following morning, April 26, 1607, land was in sight.

Chapter

slx



THE lookout's long, triumphant shout of "Land ho!" brought every man scrambling to the deck. Smith asked no one's permission then to leave his cabin-prison. Hand over hand he swung himself high into the rigging, Sam Collier close behind. There it was, a long, low cloud along the horizon. Virginia at last!

Silently he stared, watching it grow slowly in size and visibility as the ship moved forward on the fine breeze. A prickling ran along his spine, and his hands, gripping the ropes, were cold. His sharp and ardent sense of expectancy was somehow chilled by a shadow of foreboding. What adventures, what ultimate fate lay waiting there on the silently advancing shore? Would these three shiploads of Englishmen succeed where those other gallant souls had struggled and failed? Or would they, too, vanish into the dark, enormous riddle of the wilderness, become only another grim legend of Virginia, along with Roanoke and Croatan?

Below him on the deck the men were waving their caps, shouting, cheering, shaking each other's hands,

hugging and beating one another's backs in their joy and relief.

Late that afternoon the vessels sailed between two widely set headlands into a vast blue sweep of bay and dropped anchor off the southernmost cape. Boats were lowered, but so many clamoured for the honour of being the first on land that it was necessary to draw lots. Some thirty gentlemen and soldiers were chosen with Captain Newport in command.

Smith had not been among the lucky ones. He stood by the rail watching while they rowed ashore, beached the boats on the white sand and climbed the slope of the dunes under a whirling cloud of gulls. After drawing together for a moment of discussion, the men continued across the dunes and disappeared among the tall, shadowy firs and pines beyond.

For a while there was nothing to be seen but blue sea, sun-dazzled sand, the boats and the evergreens, dark against the bright spring sky. Suddenly a strange, wild, blood-chilling sound echoed across the water. Almost at the same time came the rattle of musket fire, more high-pitched, demoniac yells, then silence.

The men on board the vessels trained their ship's guns on the danger spot, while all eyes strained towards shore. Now one of their comrades came running out of the woods, then more and more. Two men appeared carrying a third between them while another stumbled along supported by friends. At last, the frantic watchers recognized Captain Newport leading his men. He, at least, showed no panic, he was retreating warily but in good order.

The boats were launched through the waves, rowed back to their several vessels and the injured

were brought aboard. They had been attacked by the native savages, they reported. Master Gabriel Archer had been wounded in both hands by arrows and Matthew Morton, a sailor, in the side.

"The savages came creeping silently upon us through the long grass on all fours, like bears, carrying their bows in their mouths," George Percy said. "Before anyone knew they were near, they let fly at us at close range."

Captain Newport had replied with a volley of musket fire, but by that time the Indians had vanished among the trees "in a most cowardly fashion," and at the same time had let out fiendish yells, enough to paralyse a man with fear.

"Well, in our first encounter the red men seem to have taken the honours," Smith said. "But if they have no better weapons than bows and arrows, we should not find them too dangerous, *if* we keep our wits about us."

That night in Captain Newport's cabin, the sealed box was opened at last and Master Hunt was asked to read aloud the names selected by His Majesty King James for the Governing Council of his new Colony.

"Bartholomew Gosnold, Edward Wingfield, Christopher Newport," he read. "John Smith"—there was a murmur at that name, but Hunt continued without pause—"John Ratcliffe, John Martin and George Kendall."

These seven were to choose a President among them to serve for a period of one year only and he, with the Council, was to govern. Matters of moment were to be examined by a jury but decided by a majority of the Council.

The document of instructions and advice was

opened next and read aloud. It was enormously detailed. The site for their colony must be on a navigable river, preferably one which flowed from the north-west, so that they could find more easily the passage into the other sea. Their settlement should be as far up the river as a bark of fifty tons could float, to be in as little danger as possible from attacks by the Spaniards, and watch must be kept at all times against them. It must be a healthful location, and easily defended.

Great care must be taken not to antagonize the natives. Some members of the Company must be assigned immediately to trade with the savages for victuals which must be stored carefully, since it was uncertain how the colonists' crops would prosper the first year. The Indians, however, must not be trusted. They must never be permitted to lay hands on any firearms, nor allowed to learn the numbers of the white settlers, nor of any sickness or deaths among them.

The sailors on the ships must not trade with the natives lest they spoil the market for the permanent colonists by setting prices too high.

The carpenters should build a storehouse first and, after that, other public buildings before any private houses. Even though some of the workmen might be servants of other colonists, they must all work at first for the colony as a whole rather than for their own masters.

A careful account of all that happened must be sent back by Captain Newport. No man should return to England except by permission and passport from the President and Council, and no letters sent containing anything which might discourage investors at home.

"Lastly and chiefly," Master Hunt read, "the way to prosper and achieve good success is to make yourselves all of one mind for the good of your country, and to serve and fear God, the Giver of all Goodness. For every plantation which our Heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted out."

The encounter with the savages had cooled some of the ardour for exploration and there was plenty of room for Smith and Sam Collier in the boat that went ashore the next day. Newport first put the ship's carpenters to work at piecing together the shallop, a large, heavy sail-boat which had been brought from England in sections. Then he led the way inland.

Cautiously this time, they advanced eight miles through towering pines and firs over a sweet-smelling carpet of red-brown needles, trailing vines and bright spring flowers. They glimpsed no savages in the forest but, returning along the shore, they saw in the distance a few Indians gathered around a fire who fled into the woods at sight of the white men. They had been roasting oysters and left many behind. The explorers sampled them and found that they were very large and of fine, delicate flavour.

On the following day, the shallop was finished and launched, and in it Captain Newport and his party continued up the bay. Soon they came to the mouth of a river so broad and majestic that all felt it must surely lead them far inland, perhaps even to the Western Sea.

The first soundings indicated that the river would be far too shallow to carry their ships, but along

a point on the northern shore they found a channel. Six, eight, twelve fathoms, the men reported, bringing the good news back to the ships.

"Well, that's a comfort for sure," one of the colonists exclaimed and Point Comfort it was named.

Before moving on, a large wooden cross was set up on the Cape where they had first touched land, and it was called Cape Henry in honour of the King's eldest son ; the opposite point, Cape Charles, for the younger royal prince.

On April 30, the three vessels weighed anchor and crossed the bay to Point Comfort, where they saw five Indians running along the beach. Captain Newport at once had the shallop manned and rowed to the shore. Standing in the bow he called out to the Indians in as friendly a fashion as he could.

Smith could see the red men peering out from among the reeds.

"Put your hand on your heart, Captain," he suggested. "That's a sign of friendship among many peoples."

Captain Newport complied and at once the Indians laid down their bows and arrows and ran to the water's edge, urging the strangers, by many smiles and gestures, to proceed farther up the river.

The shallop therefore coasted along up the shore to where many other Indians were waiting to greet them. When the white men first stepped on the beach, the Indians all fell on their knees, hiding their faces and setting up a doleful wailing sound. They sprang up cheerfully a moment later and led their visitors along a path through the woods to their village, called Kecoughtan.

The Indian huts, Smith noted, were built of saplings bent over to form long arbours, then covered with woven mats and bark. The Indians themselves, half-naked and fantastically painted though they were, seemed far superior to the natives of the West Indian Islands. The men were tall, lithe and well proportioned. Their regular, slightly aquiline features reminded Smith of Arabs, their high cheekbones and straight black hair of the Tartar tribesmen.

They wore their hair in a curious fashion ; half of it was shaved close, the rest long, knotted and stuck with feathers, birds' claws, bits of fur and even shells. The young women were well formed and comely, as were the naked, round-eyed children. The older women were horrifyingly ugly.

While one of the men welcomed the travellers with a long speech in his own language, women brought mats and spread them on the ground. The Indian men sat in a formal row opposite the white men while the women served them platters of bread, made of their Indian corn, roasted meat and delicious wild strawberries. At the end of the feast a pipeful of tobacco was passed from hand to hand. All the Indians took single puffs and their guests followed their example.

Next, an elderly, dignified savage began a high-pitched monotonous chant, beating time all the while with his hands. At once the others sprang up and began to circle around him. They kept perfect time with their feet but tossed their arms and shook their heads, grimacing, shouting and even howling like wild beasts. When the dance—if dance it was—ended, Captain Newport gave out gifts of beads and led his men back to the shallop.

As soon as they had pulled away from shore and the crowd of shouting, waving Indians, one of the gallants spoke out.

"A beggarly crowd of hovels, and people no better than wild beasts! Where are their cities, their tools and basins of pure gold, their lovely dark-haired damsels? All I saw of metal was a little poor copper, and their women were so smeared over with ill-smelling oil and red paint that they hardly seemed human. Is this the treasure land we came so far to find?"

"We can't judge the whole country by one village," Smith said. "As well judge all of England by some hamlet in the wild Western Highlands."

"The food they gave us was good, at least," Sam Collier ventured. "I never ate such strawberries, even in England."

"There's plenty of first-rate lumber here," another man added. "Trees as tall and straight as ships' masts."

And George Percy said: "Round about their village they have the low branches and underbrush so cleared away that a man could well gallop his horse through their forest."

John Smith fell silent, surprised at his own emotion. How quickly he had spoken up in defence of this land of which he had glimpsed only the outermost fringe—he, who had travelled in so many countries but always remained a stranger! This soft blue sky, this broad and shining river, these wooded shores were already working an enchantment on his heart. Even the savages, whom the others had found repulsive, fascinated him. Their language was strange and guttural, but they

spoke it slowly. It should not be too difficult to learn, he told himself.

The following day the vessels continued up the river which the red men called the Powhatan. Powhatan was the tribal name for the Indians who lived along its shores and the great Chief who ruled over all the villages of this region was also called The Powhatan.

"Like the Scots' clans," Percy said.

As they sailed, they took soundings to avoid shoals and to mark the channel. At a village called Paspahgh, the "werowance," or chief, invited them ashore to a feast. While they were enjoying it, an Indian paddled across the river in a dugout canoe to bring a message. By the man's gestures, Smith saw that the chief of a village across the water wished to entertain the white men also.

Consequently, the next morning, they crossed to the opposite shore. As they landed, a group of Indians came down to the waterside led by Rappahanna, their chief, who advanced before them playing upon a flute of reeds. On his head he wore a sort of crown made of deer's hair, coloured red, with two long feathers stuck through it and a plate of copper dangling on one side. His body was painted crimson, his face blue, powdered strangely with silver. Strings of beads circled his neck and great pearls hung in his ears. Through each ear also was stuck a bird's claw decorated with bright copper—or was it gold?

As soon as the white men landed on the beach Rappahanna ordered a mat spread upon the ground. Seating himself with immense dignity, while his men stood behind him, he took out a tobacco pipe,

lighted and smoked it, then rose and made signs for the strangers to follow him. Up a steep hill and along wide paths through pleasant woods they went to a village set in the midst of green-sprouting cornfields. After they had feasted, Newport distributed gifts of beads and copper toys to their hosts and they returned to the ships.

On up the wide stream the vessels moved while the other men began to fall, as Smith already had, under the spell of this gentle, smiling landscape, lushly green and fragrant with springtime. Red-winged blackbirds piped among the reeds at the water's edge and flashed over the tall grass of the meadows. The wooded shores were dusky with pine or bright with newly leafed trees. Squirrels frisked among branches hung with long festoons of vines—some of the little creatures seemed almost to float as they made their long astonishing leaps. "Flying squirrels" the Englishmen named them. White drifts of dogwood blossoms gleamed out of shadows where, in the evening, thousands of tiny greenish lights sparkled like whirling stars. The men had seen glow-worms before, but these new "fire-flies" were strange and lovely.

On May 13 they came to a point of land some thirty miles from the bay. The river channel, six fathoms deep, ran so close to shore that the ships could be moored to trees. The ground seemed fertile. Though not too thickly wooded, it was plentifully supplied with fine large trees. A spring offered fresh water and the narrow neck connecting it with the mainland made it defensible. After much discussion by the Council this site was chosen for settlement. Opposition came from Kendall, who wished to plant their first town directly on the bay.

Captain Gosnold, also, protested that the surrounding country was too low and marshy to be healthful, Smith learned.

The matter settled, all the men were landed from the vessels the next day. Under an awning of sail-cloth stretched between trees Master Hunt held the first religious service in the new colony. The name of Jamestown was chosen and the great river Powhatan was renamed the James in honour of the English king. The Council was then solemnly sworn into office—all but Captain Smith. Since he was still under restraint, he could neither be admitted to the Council nor take part in the voting for President, which followed immediately.

"The election is to be our free choice, of course, gentlemen," Newport explained. "However, I was instructed by the worthies in London to tell you that they wish Master Wingfield to be chosen. They can hardly be expected to support your venture if you ignore their wishes."

Wingfield was duly elected by the six members allowed to vote. He was sworn into office and accepted the honour with a lengthy and pompous speech.

When the assembly was over, Anas Todkill shook his head gloomily.

"I thought better of Captain Newport," he said. "That windy nincompoop our President?"

"Newport had his orders. He must return and face the London Council, remember," Smith said. "But I hope our President will give me my trial soon."

Wingfield put Smith's trial off, however, with the reasonable excuse that there were many tasks far more urgent.

"Trees must be cut to clear a space for tents and a storehouse built to hold our supplies," he said.

"A strong stockade of logs across the neck of land is even more urgently needed. The brush and grass there must all be cut at once, also," Smith said. "As it is now, a hundred savages could be upon us before we saw one of them. Emplacements for our ordnance next, and, of course, musket drill and target practice for the men."

Wingfield interrupted him.

"When I wish advice, I shall not ask it of a man under arrest for treason. We had particular instructions from His Majesty not to antagonize the natives. What would appear more unfriendly to them than to build a wall against them, set up cannon or shoot off our muskets? No, we'll do nothing of the sort."

Hardly able to believe what he had heard, Smith felt his temper rise again. He was about to protest hotly when, to his surprise, Kendall spoke up.

"With all due respect, Master President, I think Captain Smith is right," he said smoothly. "We were warned not to trust the savages or to let them know of our numbers or of any sick or dead among us. We should have a screen against them, surely. And isn't it only reasonable, having brought our cannon so far, to set them up to command the land approach?"

"The *land* approach?" Smith repeated. "One cannon, either saker or falcon, can cover that easily. Our heavy guns must face the water, for that's where the Spaniards would attack if they should come. Why waste good ordnance against naked men with bows and arrows?"

Wingfield tapped his cane on the ground angrily.

" Captain Smith, must I tell you twice that your opinions are not wanted? Master Kendall, since *you* advise it, I will concede in part. Build a fence across the peninsula sufficient to keep in our swine and fowls, a light fence. I appoint you to supervise the task."

And Wingfield turned away, his long cloak swaying behind him with the motion Smith found so infuriating.

" A *light* fence? " Kendall repeated. " A light fence against wild, murdering savages? "

Smith looked at him curiously. What was there about this fellow that was so baffling? On the voyage he had acted as though in constant terror of the Spaniards, and yet, once landed, he seemed to contradict himself. He had urged that they build their settlement on the bay, where they would be at the mercy of any raiding vessel. And now this—that the cannon should face landward!

" Do you really think yourself in more danger from these poor flimsy bows and arrows than from the Spanish guns? " Smith asked him.

Kendall gave an odd, harsh laugh. Then meeting Smith's probing glance his expression changed.

" At least the Indians are everywhere about us in these forests and the Spaniards a thousand miles away for all we know. I'll begin to worry about the Dons when I see their ships on the river."

For the next few days it seemed that Wingfield's policy was meeting success. Curiosity about the strange newcomers kept the Indians hovering nearby, but they seemed friendly and eager to trade corn, game and fish for the trinkets and baubles the white men had to offer. It was true that a few tools disappeared. The savages were incredibly

clever at stealing, and could move through the forest or crawl through the long grass of the fields without seeming to stir a leaf.

Entertaining the Indian guests began at last to interfere with the work of building the town, especially as their numbers increased. When the chief of Paspahugh sent forty armed warriors with deer for a feast, and when they asked to sleep that night inside the camp, it was too much.

"Hospitality be hanged! We mustn't be utter fools!" Smith snorted, and Newport agreed with him.

Wingfield was overruled. The Indians were given an extra portion of beads and copper and sent on their way before sunset.

Still impatiently waiting trial, Smith was not allowed to attend the Council meetings. These consisted, he learned from Gosnold, of endless discussions, arguments and bickerings over rules of precedence.

Idleness was impossible for Smith, however, and he joined vigorously in the work of chopping down trees and grubbing out roots. He was not surprised that Wingfield considered all such labour beneath the dignity of his rank and office, but it disturbed him more to see how most of the "gentlemen planters" also shirked the task. Not only were they awkward and unskilful with their hands, but they seized any excuse to drop their tools and turn to something else. They went roaming off into the woods in search of game, went fishing, or blandly stopped work on the plea that the weather was too warm for comfort.

"They're prompt enough at mealtimes, though," Anas Todkill said, pausing to wipe his sweaty face.

Smith grinned. "A gentleman's hands can put food into his mouth as fast as any carpenter's," he said. "That's one skill none of them lacks!"

When the storehouse was built, tents set up and the fencing-off of the peninsula done, Newport ordered the shallop provisioned.

"Judging by the size of this river and the direction from which it flows, it may well be the entrance to the North-west Passage," he said. "That would be news indeed to take back to England!"

Smith and George Percy were among the twenty men he chose for this venture. They left Jamestown about noon of May 21 and by evening they had sailed eighteen miles up the river. Immediately after they had anchored off a low, grassy point, some Indians appeared and invited them on shore. Again they were feasted and entertained with speeches and dances.

The next morning they proceeded up the smooth, darkly flowing tidal river another sixteen miles to a small island overrun with turkeys, which provided them with an excellent noon dinner. While they were sitting around their fire, a dugout canoe appeared carrying eight Indians.

"Wingapoh!" Smith called out to them, using the word which he had learned meant a friendly greeting. Promptly they beached their craft and came ashore.



"I can't make head or tail of that gibberish they talk, yet you seem to understand them, Captain Smith. How do you do it?" George Percy shook his head in amazement.

"I've met so many barbarous tongues in my travels that I've had to fashion a sort of sign language," Smith answered. "It serves for a beginning, and I've managed by now to pick up a few of these Virginians' words."

"Ask them to tell you what they know of the course of this river and what lies beyond," Newport suggested.

After a puzzled moment, one of the savages seemed to grasp what Smith wanted. He smoothed out a spot on the sand and began to draw a crude map with a stick. Master Archer, who had been writing a record of the journey, offered him his pen and paper. The young Indian took the pen in his dark fingers, dipped it cautiously in the inkpot and drew on the paper the whole course of the river.

The stream was navigable for several days' more travel, he indicated, until they came to another island. Beyond that a great waterfall blocked the way. In the distance, in a land of high mountains called Quirank, lived the Monacans, deadly enemies of the Powhatans.

Smith watched the Indian's face bent over the paper. Under the fantastic, patterned paint his features were pleasing and his expression intelligent. What did he think of these aliens with their strange, pale faces, who had appeared suddenly on his quiet river in their white-winged boat?

When the shallop was ready to move on, Newport gave the Indians presents of beads, small knives and copper trinkets, and they paddled away in their

canoe, beaming and waving as they went. When the shallop rounded the next headland, there they were again on the shore ! They had come overland with baskets of dried oysters, mulberries and little sweet nuts like acorns to offer in return.

After covering about thirty-eight miles of river, the voyagers anchored again for the evening. They rowed ashore and made a meal of the plenty provided by their Indian friends, then went back to sleep aboard the shallop. In the morning, with a good breeze blowing, they hoisted the sail and continued up the river, following the channel without difficulty.

About five miles from their night's anchorage, they sighted an Indian village surrounded by cornfields in a curve of the river. The villagers were evidently expecting them, for they stood along the shore and foremost among them were their smiling friends of the day before ! Nauriaus, the young Indian who had drawn the map, had travelled ahead to this village of Arahatec bringing news of the white men's bounty. A deer was already being roasted to provide them with a feast.

"They are almost too generous with their feasting—I've had to let my belt out two notches already," Smith said. "I think we'd give offence if we refused, however."

The chief of Arahatec confirmed Nauriaus's description of the river. The village near the falls was called Powhatan's Town, he said, because it was the birthplace of the Great Powhatan (chief werowance, or emperor, over all this river country) and its chief was the Great Powhatan's own son.

When the white men took their departure, the chief of Arahatec sent four of his men with them in the shallop to serve as guides, among them young

Nauriaus. With these ambassadors, the rest of their voyage up the river was like a triumph. Indians on both sides of the river waved and called to them, eager to trade for the fascinating trinkets the white men carried.

About ten miles beyond, they came to the second island and, on a hill above it, they saw the village the Arahatec chief had described. Between the hill and the water lay a stretch of level land where beans, pumpkins, peas, tobacco, and tall, graceful Indian corn were growing profusely. As they followed their guides along a well-marked path up the hill, Smith contrasted this site with the low, steamy marshlands about Jamestown. Our next settlement should be here, he told himself, pausing to look over the spreading view of river, fields, rolling hills and distant blue mountains.

The chief of this village received them with the now-familiar ceremonies. Newport responded with the gift of a loose linen gown for the chief. The Indian seemed disturbed by their plan to continue on to the falls, and urged them so anxiously to return that Newport promised to leave one of his men as hostage to prove he would come back this same way. There was a moment's hesitation when he asked for volunteers, then several men stepped forward. Newport chose Jeremy Deale, a young sailor whose flaming red hair fascinated and amazed the Indians. In exchange, their chief sent six of his men to guide the strangers.

Above the island the water was so shallow that they lowered sail and rowed cautiously for the next three miles. The sky was brilliant with sunset colours when they came to the end of their journey where the smoothly-flowing, amber-coloured water

changed to a foam-streaked torrent eddying and swirling about gigantic rocks. Above them it thundered down over a series of ledges. The oarsmen held the boat steady while they gazed at the tumult of water.

"No North-west Passage here," Newport said at last.

"Passage or not, it's a noble prospect," Smith said. "The river makes a drop of at least two fathoms. There's enough force there to turn many a water-mill. Ships of three hundred tons could come within five miles of here, and barges that draw no more than six feet could make it the rest of the way. If I ever saw a site for a city, here it is!"

And he fell silent before what had begun to build so swiftly in his mind.

"Tomorrow we'll continue by land," Newport decided.

The men rowed back over the darkening water and anchored for the night between the island and the shore. In the morning messengers were sent inviting the chief of Powhatan to dinner. He appeared with his followers; among them came Jeremy Deale, cheerful and full of praise for the Indians' hospitality. They had urged more food on him than he could eat, given him piles of their softest mats to sleep on with a covering woven of turkey feathers, and had even hung a necklace of shells and pearls about his neck.

"Those are fine pearls. If they had been taken properly from the oysters and drilled better, they would have been worth many a silver pound apiece in London," Master Percy told him, to his great delight.

The Indian chief enjoyed the meal of peas cooked

with pork and especially the beer, aqua-vitae and sack which the white men offered him. But to questions concerning the region beyond the falls—how many days' journey it was to the mountains of Quirank, where was the source of this river and where they got their copper and fine metals?—he gave only evasive answers. When they asked him for guides, he hesitated for a long time. He would send no guides with them, he announced at last. Speaking with great feeling and many gestures he described the distance to be covered, and the lack of friendly villages to provide food. Above all, he emphasized the fierceness of the Monacans who came down every year at the time of the falling leaves to attack his people.

Newport assured him that the Monacans were *his* enemies, also, and that he would fight for the Powhatans against them, but nothing could shake the chief's opposition to their journey.

"I think it's better to put it off for the time being," Newport said. "Why risk a quarrel?"

He therefore ordered a cross set up on one of the small islands to mark the limit of their exploration. On it was inscribed *Jacobus Rex, 1607*, to claim this land for England. Then they raised a loud and hearty cheer for King James, for Captain Newport and for Virginia.

The setting-up of this cross seemed to mystify and worry the Indians. They huddled together, whispering, until Smith managed to explain, through Nauriaus, that the two arms of the cross signified Captain Newport and their chief, the fastening in the middle, the league between them, and that the shout had been lifted in their chief's honour.

Then the vessel turned down river, pausing to

visit Arahatec and to give him a farewell gift of a scarlet waistcoat. At the mouth of another river entering from the south stood the village of Appomatecs whose chieftain was a woman. She sat under a mulberry tree, an enormously fat old creature crowned with copper. Chains of pearls and copper ornaments hung round her neck and from her ears. Nauriaus reported that she wished to hear one of the white men's muskets fired off. She listened to the explosion unmoved, although her women and many of her warriors fled away and hid themselves in the woods in terror at the noise.

At Nauriaus's suggestion, they next crossed the river to a village of the Weanocks, where Opechancanough, chief of the Pamunkeys, was staying. Tall, muscular, gorgeously painted and tattooed, with long eagle feathers in his hair and a triple rope of great pearls as large as peas about his neck, he maintained an air of chilly dignity. He received Newport's gifts like the tribute of some inferior, scarcely deigning to look at them.

The Weanocks treated him with servile deference.

"He is the brother of the Great Powhatan," Nauriaus explained to Smith. "They are sons of the same mother, so Opechancanough will be the ruling high chief when the Powhatan dies."

"But the Great Powhatan has a son—we met him at the falls. Will he not be the chief?" Smith asked him.

Nauriaus shook his head, puzzled at the question.

"Not the son—no—but the brother," he repeated. "After the brother then the sister and then the sister's sons."

"A strange law of inheritance!" George Percy said, noting it down in his journal.

The next morning the shallop continued its progress down the widening stream. Some Indians, fishing just off a point, offered to exchange their catch for the beads and copper trifles of the white men.

Nauriaus spoke with them at some length, then returned to the shallop with a troubled face.

"I must leave you now and go back to Arahattec," he announced. "I will come to see you at your village in three days."

With that he dived into the river, swam ashore, turned once to wave farewell and disappeared quickly among the trees.

"Now what could have made him change his mind so suddenly?" Newport said, gazing after him. "A few hours ago he seemed delighted at the prospect of coming with us."

Although out of earshot, Smith had watched the discussion of the Indians attentively.

"From their gestures I think they were telling him of something that happened farther down the river," he said. "Could it have been at Jamestown?"

The two men looked at each other, startled.

"That's it!" Newport cried. "Up anchor! We've no time to lose!"

Chapter

seven



THE tension aboard the shallop mounted with every mile. When they rounded the final point and Jamestown came in sight at last, they stared across the sun-dazzled water. All looked green and peaceful. The masts of the ships rose above the low headland just as before. And yet?

"No one in sight," Newport said, frowning. "Fire off a signal gun."

The report, echoed back from the wooded shore, brought men swarming down to the waterside, and the sound of cheering came faintly across the tide.

"Thank God!" Smith wiped his sweating hands on his doublet, and he heard Captain Newport let out a long-held breath.

When they reached Jamestown, however, they learned that a force reckoned at two hundred Indians had attacked the colonists on the day before while they were planting the cleared ground. Fourteen men had been wounded by arrows, and a boy had been killed outright. A boy? Smith felt a tightening of his throat, then relief as he saw Sam's

small figure come running to meet him from among the tents.

"So you've been in a battle already?" he said, giving the boy a sharp hug, then holding him off to look at him. "And how did you acquit yourself under fire?"

"I was mightily scared and I ran as fast as I could," Sam confessed. "I was near the edge of the woods and I thought for sure I was a goner. But all the men ran, too—some faster than me."

"What? The armed sentries?" Smith frowned.

"There weren't any sentries," Sam told him. "The President said that the Indians were so friendly there was no need. He thought the damp air was making the muskets rusty, so he had them all put up in dry fats. If it hadn't been for Master Kendall and a few gentlemen who had kept theirs out for hunting, there'd be none of us left, I reckon. Captain Gosnold fired a cross-bar shot from his ship that knocked down a tree on top of the savages. That finally frightened them away."

"No stockade, no sentries, no muskets!" Smith went cold with anger. "Of all the blind, stupid——"

"Master Wingfield fought valiantly, I'll say that for him," Sam said reluctantly. "I saw an arrow go through his beard and draw blood from his chin, but he never flinched."

"A man can be brave and stupid, too," Smith said, bitterly. "But I'll warrant that now, at last, we'll risk offending his copper-coloured friends and build the palisade which should have been our first task."

Building the log barrier was slow work, hampered by constant attacks from the Indians. A flight of

arrows from the long grass killed George Percy's mastiff, and Master Eustace Clovell, scouting outside the fort, was pierced by six arrows at once and died a week later. Two more men were badly wounded before the defence was complete, a tight little fort, triangular in shape and with cannon mounted on the three corners.

Watch was now kept day and night. One morning the sentry's alarm roused the fort; soon afterward a familiar voice was heard calling out the



word of peace, "Wingapoh!" Nauriaus with a companion, both unarmed, were standing in the clearing at the edge of the wood.

Newport and Smith met them outside the barricade and Nauriaus reported that he brought a message from the chiefs of Arahatec and Pamunkey, the white men's friends. They had threatened war against the attackers of Jamestown, whom he identified as Chesapeake, Paspaheghans, Tapahanocks and Appomatecs, and had persuaded them to leave.

"There will be peace now," the Indian said.

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"But you should cut down these weeds and long grass about your fort," he advised.

"We need a naked savage to tell us that!" Smith growled. "If *I* hadn't been the one to suggest it first, perhaps Wingfield would have done it long ago."

Newport spoke uncomfortably.

"They say he acquitted himself well during the fighting. I'm sure he has the colony's good at heart and will always do his duty as he sees it."

Smith gave him a fiery look.



"You'll be sailing shortly; you won't be left here under his rule!" he said.

The ships had not to sail without a cargo, however, and the next weeks were spent in gathering spicy sassafras, cutting logs and splitting them into clapboard. And now, once again, Smith demanded that he be given a trial.

President Wingfield had other plans.

"Let the fellow return to England and be tried by the Councillors in London," he said. "We will send a sealed letter containing our charges and trust them to deal with him."

Leave Virginia? This Smith refused to do, and Wingfield was overruled. The planters were assembled, a jury chosen, the charges brought, the witnesses heard, and Smith spoke briefly in his own defence. The verdict was overwhelming. He was found innocent of all charges, his accusers were censured for making false statements, and the next day he was sworn into the Council.

When the proceedings were over, Captain Newport gave a stern and earnest warning to the assembled company to forget their quarrels and save their energies for the task of building a strong, enduring colony. To this Master Hunt added his own plea, reminding them how much depended upon their goodwill and judgment now.

The wisdom of their words was plain to every man. With the departure of the two larger ships, the huge and hostile wilderness would close around them. If this band of a hundred venturers were to stand alone against the continent, they must stand together. Soberly they shook hands all around, and every man promised devotion to their colony. The Virginia sun had never shone more brightly than it did upon that small green headland on Midsummer's Day of 1607.

Captain Newport took his ships out on the next tide, promising to return with fresh supplies from England within twenty weeks. The men waved him off cheerily; then a silence fell over them. Sam Collier moved closer to Smith, his eyes round. Now is the time, Smith thought. These twenty weeks—five months—will tell the story. What will it be? Will we be here to watch the ships returning?

A mosquito stung his cheek and he slapped at it

impatiently. They were getting worse. The damp, muggy heat of the last few days had brought them swarming up out of the marshlands. Annoying, but he'd not be much of a soldier if he let a mosquito put him out of temper.

At his first meeting with the Council, Smith learned that the ships' departure had left them dangerously scant of victuals. Because the voyage had taken more than twice the time expected, it had been necessary to provision the ships for their return out of what had been brought for the colony's store.

The corn they had planted, however, was now a foot above the ground, and the country itself was fruitful, the sea teemed with fish and crabs and the forest was surely full of game waiting for their taking. Wingfield had brought everything he might need for himself and his servants in his private supply.

"I only hope that other gentlemen have been equally provident," he stated.

At the urging of Gosnold and Smith, Thomas Studley, as "Cape Merchant," was ordered to ration what grain there was. A pint of wheat and barley, boiled together, was allowed for each man every day. That, together with fish, game, eggs and poultry, and pork from the occasional slaughter of a pig, should keep them in good health.

Almost at once, however, the grain was found to be full of weevils and much of it had spoiled in its twenty-six weeks in the ships' holds. The heat increased and with it a strange lassitude crept over the planters. The corn, which had sprung up so quickly, began to curl and wither in the sun. Watering and cultivating it became unbearably exhaust-

ing work. A musket seemed too heavy a burden to carry in search of game, and rowing on the river to fish was so tiring that men fainted over the oars.

The hostile Indians did not reappear—at least they were spared that. The chief Tapahanna came to announce his friendship. He touched his heart, then pointed to the sun to show the sacredness of his vow. His black glance rested on the yellowed cornstalks standing in the field and on the pale, sweat-dampened faces all about him before he stepped into his dugout canoe and paddled away without a backward look.

July passed, August came, the river shimmered in the blinding heat, the water of their well grew low and brackish, then failed altogether. Since no one had the strength to dig another, they were reduced to drinking the river water, at flood tide salty, and at low tide full of slime and filth.

The lassitude turned into fever, strange swellings, cramping of the stomach, sickness and, for many, violent and torturing death. Sam Collier was among the first to be stricken. Smith nursed him day and night. When the boy had recovered, Smith fell ill himself and lay helpless for the space of a week. Fever and famine bred on each other. The men lay where they fell, tossing in delirium, tormented by flies in the daylight and mosquitoes at night. Those who had recovered and might have tended them were weak from hunger.

Some of the men disappeared. They wandered off in search of fruits and berries and did not return, and no one asked for them. With a few, valiant, hollow-eyed ghosts who had lived through the disease, led by Master Hunt, Smith staggered about the camp doing what he could to relieve his comrades

and, when he could do no more, burying the dead. Of the Council, Wingfield and Kendall were still weak with fever and Martin and Ratcliffe were desperately ill. Captain Gosnold had barely survived the first onslaught. Smith bent over him, trying to get him to take the thin gruel of barley and water which seemed the only thing the sick man could swallow.

"How goes it with the others?" Gosnold whispered. "Have we lost many of our company?"

Smith nodded. "But the disease is beginning to spend itself," he said, with a confidence he did not feel.

"Good." Gosnold paused for breath. "I feel vastly better today. No pain. Only great weariness." He closed his eyes and lay back on the hay-filled pallet Smith had prepared for him. But by sunset he, too, was gone.

The shock of his friend's death roused Smith from the numb indifference which had settled over him since his own illness.

"He, at least, shall have a decent burial," he declared, his face grim. And Captain Bartholomew Gosnold was laid to rest with a full military salute of cannon and musket fire over his shallow grave.

When September came, forty-six out of the hundred colonists were dead and buried. The rest sat huddled in groups, gazing with sunken eyes out over the waters where the Spanish ships might appear or at the dark shore of the mainland where the savages lurked. Death was waiting for them everywhere. Why keep up the painful, hopeless struggle?

But since Gosnold's passing, a tireless, enduring,

unbeatable flame had flared up again in Smith's gaunt body. Once more, it seemed to him, God's hand had reached out and plucked him from the midst of destruction. "There's a pattern, a meaning to this," he told himself one wakeful night as he lay looking out over the still water where the moon's path cut a golden sword blade. "We are all put into this world for a purpose, not for ourselves, surely, but to help others." His life had been in jeopardy countless times before this, yet somehow spared. He had been schooled and tempered by hardship and danger. His feet had been directed across many countries and strange seas into this wilderness. Perhaps—was it because God needed him for the taming of this beautiful, savage land? Then if God had chosen to preserve and guide him, why should he doubt the issue? A certitude as clear and cool as the surrounding moonlight welled up within him and he fell quietly asleep.

The next morning Smith woke with a sense of well-being and renewed strength. When he got to his feet, he found that he was still none too steady, but his mind was clear and his hope was high. The only member of the Council so far recovered, he took the leadership and set about rousing his comrades from their coma of despair. Those with the most energy he sent to gather a scanty harvest of shellfish and crabs along the river, the weaker he put on watch against an attack by the Indians.

He got little thanks.

"They'd rather starve than lift a hand to help themselves!" Sam Collier said indignantly.

"It's the weakness speaking, not the men," Smith told him. "Poor wretches! But no persuasion can persuade *me* to starve. No, Sam, I'll

have them up and about if it's only to avenge themselves on me for plaguing them out of a peaceful death!"

A hoarse shout and the crack of a musket shot came from one of the sentries, and a voice answered from the water, "Wingapoh!" A file of Indian dugout canoes had appeared on the river, heading towards their point.

"Wingapoh!" the call came again. The word of peace!

Smith hurried to the shore. Nauriaus hailed him from the foremost canoe.

"We are bringing you fresh corn from our gardens. We have not forgotten our friends," he said.

The canoes grounded on the beach and the white men saw that they were loaded with ears of fresh green corn, the grains filled to bursting with milky sweetness. Smith's eyes blurred as he greeted the young Indian.

"You are my friend and I will be your friend while the sun rides in the sky," Smith said, touching his heart, then pointing upwards.

Nauriaus acknowledged the gesture gravely.

"I have brought back a boy from your village," he said. He hesitated, then spoke quietly for Smith's ears alone. "He told me that you were hungry, and so I brought food. I did not tell our chief or our warriors what he said——" He hesitated again. "They are not *all* your friends."

The boy, William White, jumped out of the canoe, waded ashore, and stood before the hollow-eyed Captain.

"I ran away, sir, and then I got lost in the woods. I thought the Indians would murder me, but they

were kind. I suppose I'll get a beating now, for running away?"

"No one is going to beat you, Will," Smith said. "Not when you've brought such plenty back with you."

Gifts were lavished on the Indians in return for the food, and they paddled away, promising to return soon with more.

"It's a miracle!" Master Hunt declared. "In our extremity God has softened the hearts of our enemies. All praise and thanks to His mercy!"

The red men kept their word, bringing corn, fish, fruit and venison almost daily. Slowly the fever-wasted survivors got their strength back and Wingfield and Kendall now appeared at the common table for the first time in many weeks.

"They must have had good provisions somewhere," James Reade, the blacksmith, said, glowering under swarthy brows. "Look how sleek our President is."

Others did more than glower.

"Our President deigns to come to our table only now that the savages have relieved us. Had he victuals left in his private store? Every other gentleman shared what he had in our time of famine."

George Percy's mild face was flushed and angry.

Master Martin had seen his own son die and had been too weak to aid him.

"My poor boy might be alive today if he had had only a little of what has made Master Wingfield so hearty," he said, choking.

John Ratcliffe was direct and blunt.

"He has disgraced himself. Hang him, and Kendall, too!"

But, to everyone's surprise, Smith opposed that.

"We few who are left of the Council must keep the laws. We must rid the colony of his misrule, but by legal means."

Wingfield blustered and protested, but in vain. The Council got down to the business swiftly, for the temper of the men was rising against a President who had had food and kept it for himself while they were starving.

"It was my own supply I brought here at my own expense. I took nothing that belonged to anyone else, and even refrained from taking my own share out of the common store," Wingfield kept explaining self-righteously, unable to understand the hatred that glared at him from every face.

No sooner was Wingfield deposed from the Presidency and Kendall from the Council, than the Council met and elected John Ratcliffe (next in social rank and seniority) President in his place. Wingfield was put aboard the pinnace for his own safety, for there were many threats against his life. He went with a scornful air of injured virtue.

"He'll be far too comfortable," one of the men growled. "He has a store of food there."

Smith listened, a cold gleam in his eyes.

"Since we have begun these proceedings, let's get all our legal business finished at once," he said. "Master Archer, you are a lawyer. Will you draw up a libel suit for me? This man once made accusations against *me* which were proved to be false, and I demand damages."

Wingfield was thereupon brought ashore, the crime of libel was charged against him and the jury gave a unanimous verdict of guilty. A fine of two hundred silver pounds was levied, to be paid to Smith.

"And since he does not have that sum here, I'll take my payment in goods," Smith said. "Whatever food he is keeping so thriftily is therefore mine, and I now give it over into the general supply."

The cheer that rose was the heartiest sound Jamestown had heard since Captain Newport's ship sailed down the river.

"But why go through all that rigmarole?" Anas Todkill protested. "It should have been taken from him at once, without ceremony."

"No. If we are to have a peaceful, law-abiding colony we must give the law its chance," Smith said earnestly. "We're planting the seeds of all our hopes and we must plant with care and foresight."

The settling of this business, together with the cooler weather and good food, lifted the spirits of the settlers. Ratcliffe, however, was none too popular. He had a bitter tongue and a suspicious temper. His manner of giving orders roused resentment in the men. The work of building houses to replace the flimsy tents began to lag.

"Perhaps you should confine yourself to the general rule of the colony and leave the builders' work to young Captain Smith, who has had experience in outdoor labour," Master Hunt suggested, as tactfully as he could.

Smith had been working as Cape Merchant, or storekeeper. He now took charge of the building also. Where Ratcliffe had given orders, Smith took the tools into his own hands. His vigorous example, together with some strong language, shamed the lazy, while his praise cheered on the weary and inexperienced. A change came over the rebellious, resentful men. Before long they had built enough huts—semi-dugouts of logs chinked with clay and

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thatched with straw—so that everyone could sleep snug against the cold. They had even started the foundations of a church to delight the heart of good Master Hunt.

By this time the Indians were coming less often to trade and Smith, as storekeeper, asked permission to go in search of the corn they must have as provision for the winter. With six companions he set out in the shallop, rowing down the river with the tide. The night had been cold and frosty, and now on either bank the forest had miraculously changed its hue. Yellow and russet were familiar autumn colours, but these trees towered like pillars of flame mirrored in the water. .

They rounded a curve and a deer, which had been standing on the shore, turned and dashed away into the woods. A fish-hawk swept like an arrow past them, struck the surface of the water into silver spray, then rose with a fish glittering in its talons. The sky was a high, clear blue. Thousands of points of light danced on the ripples. The air blowing up the river was clean and fresh with the sea. Smith, holding the tiller of the boat, breathed it in deeply. Was it possible for a man to fall in love with a land? And yet what else was it that he felt at this moment as he looked about him but love—strong, fiercely possessive, unshaken by disaster, abiding. The words of an old song returned to him

*But true love is a durable fire,
In the mind ever burning.
Never sick, never old, never dead,
To itself returning.*

At Kecoughtan, the Indian village on Point Comfort at the mouth of the James, they went ashore

and offered to trade. Word of the white men's sickness and need had come to these Indians and they bargained shrewdly. Grinning, the chief held a handful of corn in his palm and demanded a musket and a sword in return.

"So that's their price, is it?" Smith said. His eyes were bright and unsmiling. "Come, lads, back to the boat."

Just off shore he brought them about.

"When I give the word, you three fire your muskets, but aim above their heads," he said. "The others be ready to fire while they reload."

At the sound of the first volley, the Indians fled for the woods, howling in terror.

"Run the boat ashore," Smith said. "I thought they'd change their tune."

He marched his six soldiers in military order up the beach and into the Indian village. They could see corn heaped in baskets, but Smith restrained his men from taking it.

"I want them to sell it in fair trade," he said.

From the woods now came heart-chilling Indian war-whoops, and the savages appeared again. Fifty or sixty warriors armed with clubs, bows and arrows, advanced leaping and howling with their okee, or idol, borne high before them. Smith ordered his men to fire at the ground in front of them. Down fell the okee and away ran the panic-stricken savages, leaving their idol behind in the dust and smoke.

Smith picked it up and examined it curiously. It was a hideous doll made of skins stuffed with moss and hung all over with beads and copper.

"It may be possessed of a devil," one of the men said, looking at it fearfully. "We'd best destroy it at once."

Smith shook his head.

"No. The poor creatures revere it as a god, since they know no better. We'll let them ransom it. Here comes their chief now."

Trembling with fear, the man approached and flung himself on the earth at the white man's feet. His okee was in the stranger's hands! For all the tales he had heard of their starving, these pale-faced newcomers must still be powerful. He would obey them in anything.

"Send six of your young fellows here unarmed to load our boat with corn," Smith ordered in their language. "When they have done that, I will give you back your okee, and I will pay you in beads and copper and hatchets besides. I did not come to harm you but to be your friend,—but only if you will trade honestly with us."

"But why should we give them anything? He's too terrified to oppose us at all!" one of the soldiers protested.

"This time, yes," Smith answered. "But if we deal with them fairly now they'll be ready to trade with us again. Trade is one thing, plunder is another. Trade can build our country, plunder can only destroy it."

The Indians were pathetic in their surprise and gratitude for the white captain's unexpected leniency. After the boat was loaded with corn, they brought venison, turkeys, wild fowl and bread also, singing and dancing to show their joy and waving from the shore so long as the shallop was in sight.

Back in Jamestown with their welcome cargo, Smith was eager to try again.

"Now is the time to get what corn we can while the Indian harvest is new-gathered," he said. "The

pinnacle will hold three times more than the shallop. Let me take that instead." And the President gave permission.

The pinnacle needed repairs and Ratcliffe set men to work on it. Meanwhile, he allowed Smith to take the shallop up the Chickahominy, which branched from the James just above the fort. Smith found the Indians friendly and eager to trade, and he returned with another boatload of corn.

When Smith and his party came in sight of Jamestown, they could see men milling about on the shore in confusion. What was wrong? The pinnacle was anchored a little way off shore, fully rigged, and men aboard her were hoisting a sail. As the shallop came past her stern, Smith saw Wingfield on the deck, and Kendall's dark, hawk-nosed face looked down over the rail.

The shallop came aground and George Percy hurried down the bank to meet him.

"What's wrong?" Smith asked, jumping into the shallow water and wading ashore. "Why all the long faces?"

"Wrong, indeed!" Percy said. "Wingfield and Kendall are deserting us. They have bribed a crew and are taking the pinnacle out with this tide, bound for England."

Smith's eyes blazed.

"And our President—does he permit this?" he demanded.

Ratcliffe elbowed his way through the crowd.

"I forbade them flatly!" His voice was high-pitched and wild. "They have no right to go without my permission—that's written plain in the charter. Their story is that they'll fetch us back

supplies from England. When I order them ashore, Wingfield spouts his speeches and Kendall laughs with his devil's sneer. What can I do ? ”

“ Do ? Give me leave and I'll fetch them ashore for you,” Smith said.

“ Why—of course—do anything you can,” Ratcliffe said, bewildered.

The words were barely spoken when Smith started at a run for the fort. “ Come, I need you, lads,” he called back over his shoulder. “ Percy, Sands, Robinson, Fenton, Tankard—you, too, Sam ! ”

Before the men aboard the pinnace knew what was happening, Smith and his men turned the falcon—a light cannon—upon them. The air shook with the shattering roar. The shot whistled across the vessel's bow and splashed in the water beyond.

While the echoes were still reverberating, Smith appeared on the ramparts beside the gun.

“ I'll give you until I count to twenty-five. Come ashore, or I'll sink you there where you lie in the river ! ” he shouted between his cupped hands.

Wingfield and Kendall, pale and furious, were shouting something back, but Smith's fingers were in his ears.

“ One ! ” he counted slowly, “ Two ! ”

Now an argument which became a struggle seemed to be going on aboard the little vessel. Then the ship's boat was lowered and men scrambled into it. Smith's count had barely reached eleven when the boat touched shore. Wingfield, red as a turkey-cock, and Kendall, like the very mask of hate, sat in the stern.

“ Always it's *you* ! You low-born rogue ! ” Wingfield choked over the words. “ You'll regret this on the day you hang. We're all doomed here

without more help from England—you know that as well as we ! ”

“ Bah—you speak like a coward and a fool ! ” Smith said. “ Even if you were right, we should face our doom together. But I have a better opinion of our comrades than to despair now. We’ve come through a bad time, but we’ve made a good beginning. We’ve a fort to protect us, houses, fuel, food, God to watch over us and our noble venture—what more should we need ? Your chances in that cockleshell in the midst of the winter storms were surely no better than here. Stay with us, and be content.”

Wingfield and Kendall responded with impotent glares, but most of the men whom they had persuaded to follow them seemed relieved to be back. Smith’s reminder of the dangers of the voyage had hit home.

Unreconciled, however, was James Reade, the high-tempered, muscular blacksmith. He remained surly and bitter. Smith took pains to avoid any clash with him.

“ Time will cool him down,” he said. “ We need his skill ; we’d be hard put to it without him.”

President Ratcliffe saw the matter differently, however.

“ The fellow must learn that insolence will be punished,” he stated, his lips tight as he made his way across the muddy ground to the smithy.

The orders he gave to Reade were not obeyed, and the blacksmith’s answer to him was first an insulting silence, then a string of oaths. Livid with rage, Ratcliffe set to beating him with his cane, at which the smith let fly with his heavy hammer, and would

surely have killed the President if men had not arrived to pull him off.

Then there was nothing for it but to hold the man for attempted murder. He was tried, found guilty and sentenced to hang. He remained defiant, unable to believe that the sentence would be carried out until the rope was almost around his neck and Master Hunt was opening his Bible.

"Wait!" he cried. "There is one among you who means to murder you all—why should *I* die for threatening a single life?"

Ratcliffe was for ignoring this desperate plea, but the rest of the Council welcomed the chance of reprieve.

"Tell us what you mean. If you speak the truth we may spare you," Master Martin told him.

The blacksmith pointed his finger at Kendall.

"That's the man," he said. "When he was persuading me to go in the pinnace, I said that I had no wish to return to England. Then he told me in secret that they were not going to England at all but to a Spanish port in the West Indies. John Kendall may be his name, but he's a spy in the pay of Spain."

Kendall sat quiet. His face had not changed nor did he move a muscle of it during the accusation.

"Why, the poor rogue's lying, as any man would to try to save his neck," he said.

"The word of a man who is about to die carries much weight in court," Master Archer said hesitantly, and Kendall gave his former friend a brief, poisonous look.

"I can prove my words!" Reade cried. "Look

in his strong-box. He had me mend the clasp and I looked inside. You'll find a paper in the bottom—a folded paper."

There was a change in Kendall now. His face was suddenly tallow-pale.

"The man's lying," he said, but the words came in a hoarse whisper.

Someone was sent to fetch the strong-box, and it was prised open and searched. The paper was there and its contents were enough to condemn its owner. It was addressed to the commander of whatever Spanish force might capture Virginia, stating that the man known as George Kendall was a trusted servant of Zuniga, Spanish Ambassador to England. George Kendall's trial was swift, the verdict was "Guilty," and the sentence, death. Since he was a gentleman and an officer and had been a member of the Council he was not hanged, but shot by a musket volley. Reade was pardoned and went back to his smithy, while the rest of the planters, sobered by the affair, took up their work again.

November brought flocks of migrating wild swans, geese, ducks and cranes to cover the river and the marshes. Food was now plentiful—roasted game, bread made from the Indian corn, Virginia peas, pumpkins, and that strange fruit, frost-ripened to spicy sweetness, called by the Indians putchimins or persimmons.

In spite of this plenty, Smith went twice more up the Chickahominy to fetch back loads of corn. On his return from the second of these trips he found President Ratcliffe and Master Archer convinced that duty called *them* to sail for England in the pinnace! They were only dissuaded by Smith's

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threat once again to sink it where it lay. He had another argument, also.

"This Chickahominy River is a fine, full-flowing stream, and it heads down from the north-west. Let me explore it and learn its source. The finding of the North-west Passage would be a triumph for us all." And the Council quickly voted to send him.

From eager volunteers he chose ten men to go with him in an open barge. Sam Collier had sprained his ankle turning cartwheels and had to be left behind. He hobbled down to the shore to see them off, and his small, disconsolate figure waving from the ramparts of the fort was the last they saw of Jamestown.

Chapter eight



THE Chickahominy continued broad and deep for forty miles above where it entered the James. Smith sounded carefully and mapped the channel as they went. He noted the low marshes and the higher lands beyond, the islands, and a peninsula where a prosperous Indian village stood surrounded by cornfields. The soil was a light, sandy loam, the cliffs red, white and yellow sand above red and white clay. A good site for a town—more healthful, surely, than Jamestown.

Ten miles farther and the river narrowed. A great fallen tree blocked the barge's passage and had to be chopped away. The current now increased, and rowing the heavy barge became laborious.

"We'll go back to that last village and hire a canoe from the Indians," Smith decided.

The next day, with two Indian guides, Smith, Thomas Emry and John Robinson continued in the canoe up the river. The others remained in the barge anchored in midstream. Smith gave these men orders not to go ashore until his return, for some of the Indians had seemed unfriendly.

For twelve more miles the river ran narrow and deep, increasingly blocked by trees. Cutting through them was heavy, slow work. The December sun set early, and the men went ashore to make a camp, exhausted by their labour.

When a fire was built and a kettle boiling, Smith decided to try to shoot some ducks with his fine wheel-lock pistol to supplement their meal. He took one of the Indian guides with him and left Robinson and Emry by the fire with a warning to keep their slow-matches lighted and to signal with a shot at the first sight of any other Indians.

He had not been gone a quarter of an hour when the fearful sound of a war-whoop reached him through the shadowy forest, but there was no signalling shot from his comrades. Had their guides betrayed them? He turned on the Indian at his side. The fellow looked startled and frightened and protested that he had no idea of what was happening.

"Just to make sure——" Smith said. He held his pistol against the man's breast and, for want of anything else, whipped off one of his own garters, formed a loop in it with his other hand and his teeth and slipped it over the Indian's arm. With him serving as a shield, he started back towards the camp-fire, his pistol ready.

The forest was deathly still all about them. The silence magnified the noise of their moving. A sharp, whirring sound—a spent arrow had struck Smith in the thigh. He wheeled in time to see two Indians aiming bent bows and he fired point-blank without a chance to aim. He missed, but they fell down in panic, then jumped up and fled. He barely had time to reload his pistol when three or four more appeared. He shot at them and one set

up a wild outcry. He, at least, must have been hit.

After that they were more cautious, giving him ample time to reload. He could see their dark shapes among the trees, but fear of his firearms kept them out of range, and their arrows fell short. Slowly he began to move again toward the camp-fire. Still no sound from Robinson and Emry. The Indian beside him was shaking with terror.

"They are not from my village. They are Pamunks—a hunting party. Their chief, Opechancanough, is with them," he said.

The silence of Robinson and Emry was ominous. Smith tried to go faster and at the same time to keep a lookout all around. Something gave way under his feet, he stumbled, plunged forward and was suddenly waist-deep in icy water with his tethered guide struggling beside him.

The freezing chill struck through him like a knife and he felt his legs going numb. What now? He must choose quickly, either to die of the cold or risk himself with the Indians. He made his choice. Deliberately he threw his wet and useless pistol and his sword from him.

"Where is Opechancanough, your chief?" he called. "I am Captain Smith. We met in peace at Weanock."

Arrows still notched in their bowstrings, the circle of Indians closed in while Smith held his hands high to show that he was now unarmed.

"Where is your chief, Opechancanough?" he demanded again, putting all the authority he could summon into his voice.

One of the warriors stepped nearer and Smith recognized the stalwart, grim-faced chief. He looked

fixedly at the white man, at the pistol lying on the ground before him, then said something to his men. They laid aside their bows and hauled Smith and his guide from the water. Already he was too numb to stand and his clothes were freezing on him.

"Bring him to the fire," Opechancanough ordered, and they half led, half carried him back to his own camp.

They tied him to a tree, near enough to the fire so that he could feel some of its warmth, but for what? A little way off Robinson lay dead on the ground, transfixed by arrows. Of Emry he saw nothing. Had he escaped to take word to Jamestown of their fate? Smith hoped.

Opechancanough stepped close to him, showing his teeth in a fierce grin.

"We have killed your two men! Now I wish to see how a chief of the English dies."

Smith faced him with a bold stare. Deliberately he reached into his pouch and drew out his most precious instrument—his gold-and-ivory ball compass—and held it high. The firelight danced on the polished surface and the chief stared at it, suddenly motionless. It was plain that he had never seen anything in the least like it before.

"Hold it," Smith told him. "Or are you afraid?"

Opechancanough lowered his bow, reached out hesitantly and took the compass in his hand. The hard, transparent glass seemed to amaze him. He could see the needle moving beneath but could not touch it.

"What is this?" he asked.

Desperately summoning all his store of the Indian tongue, Smith launched into a description of the course of the planets through space and the relation

of that small, swaying splinter of steel to them all. The Indians listened while the firelight flickered on their oil-smeared painted faces. So might a lost soul lecture to demons in Hell, Smith thought, and with as little chance for mercy.

And yet surely Opechancanough had a different look—excited, eager, eyes wide, attentive as a child.

Smith drew a deeper breath and continued :

“ This is strong magic—it guides me across the great waters of the sea and through forests at night when clouds hide the moon and the stars. I give it to you as a gift to show that I have not forgotten the day we feasted at Weanock.”

Opechancanough spoke some orders. Smith's bonds were untied and two Indians rubbed and chafed his legs until his circulation returned. Then he was led through the woods, Opechancanough stalking in the lead while his warriors carried Smith's sword and pistol.

When they reached the hunting camp, women and children came running out to stare, while in an open space in the midst of the tents the warriors formed a circle about Smith and Opechancanough. They began to dance, howling out an unintelligible rhythmic chant. Smith hardly dared to guess the meaning of this, but he took his cue from Opechancanough. The chief stood like a statue moulded in heavy bronze. Smith lifted his head also and assumed a haughty dignity he did not feel.

Smith was then led into one of the houses and seated upon a mat beside the fire. Platters of bread and venison were brought, far more than his queasy appetite could manage. None of his guards would eat with him, he noticed, and what he left the women put into baskets and hung from the poles

above his head. More mats were piled up for him to sleep on and an old Indian brought him a robe of fur for a covering.

"At Weanock you gave me white beads," he said. "Now I give you this to keep you from the cold."

Smith thanked him. An intense desire for sleep was overwhelming him. Could the food have been drugged? he wondered. He was struggling to stay awake when a commotion among his guards brought him up with a start. They had caught an Indian creeping into the hut armed with a knife.

"He is the father of one of the men you shot with your pistol," they explained. "He wants your life for his son's, but we will make sure you are not harmed."

Well, if that was the case he would rest tonight, at least. God's hand was over him as surely here in this smoky hut as it had been so many times before. He drew the fur robe about his shoulders, turned over and fell asleep.

The next morning Opechancanough came to join him beside the fire. He asked many questions about the white man's homeland, his people and the gods they worshipped. Smith answered, then asked questions in his turn. Did this river lead into the Great Salt Sea? What lay beyond the mountains to the west? Had other white men come here, and where were they now? Did the chief know of any metal in the earth like copper, but of a paler colour?

"I have never seen those things for myself but I have heard of them from travelling traders," Opechancanough said. "Many days' journey from the Falls, salt water dashes against rocks. It may be the other sea you seek. In a place called Ocanahonan

the men wear clothes like yours. There is also a country called Anone where the houses have straight, thick walls and the people wear pale, shining copper. But it is far, very far from here."

The North-west Passage? Raleigh's men? Gold? Had he chanced upon traces of them at last? Smith's heart beat strongly as the hope flashed through his mind. But the chief was speaking again, leaning close, laying a dark and sinewy hand on his.

"My warriors and I have had a council," he said. "We know that you are a werowance of great power. Join our tribe, and we will give you land, copper, women——! Use your magic ball to guide us and your firestick to fight. Soon we will attack your fort. Show us how to capture it and the other white men's weapons."

So that was what he wanted! Smith smiled, but shook his head.

"I will use my power to help you against your enemies, but my people are not your enemies. They want peace, though when they learn that I am your prisoner they may wish to be revenged on you. To prove that I am speaking the truth, and that we are your friends, send a messenger to our fort. I will send my words to say that you are treating me kindly, and they will reward him with rich gifts."

"Send your words?" Opechancanough repeated.

Smith took out his notebook, his pen and his small flask of ink. While the Indians watched in puzzled wonder he tore out a leaf and wrote on it.

"This will carry my words. Send it by your swiftest runner and see if I have told you the truth."

His friends must now believe him dead, and he knew that his life hung on the slenderest thread.

But he still had a chance to warn Jamestown that Opechancanough planned an attack.

It could be prevented, he wrote, by making a display of force, firing off muskets and cannon to impress the messengers, while, at the same time, treating them as friends and giving the gifts he listed. He addressed his letter to George Percy, whom he could trust to follow his instructions.

For three days Smith waited for the runners to return. Snow was falling on the evening of the third day when they reappeared. They brought the gifts to their chief—the scarlet jacket braided with gilt, the iron hatchet and the knife—all as Smith had promised.

Opechancanough could not conceal his amazement.

“The thing you sent looked no stronger than an autumn leaf, yet it carried your words just as you said it would. You are a great werowance and you speak with a true tongue, Captain Smith.”

“Come with me to my village. I will show you even more wonderful things,” Smith told him.

“No,” Opechancanough answered. “I am your friend. See, I am giving you back your magic ball that follows the North Star. But my older brother, the Great Powhatan, has sent word that he wishes to see you. You will start for his home at Werewocomoco on the Pamunkey River in the morning.”

So he was to see the Great Powhatan at last? If he could win his friendship, it would mean the salvation of the colony, for he ruled with absolute power of life and death over all the tribes up and down these rivers.

It was still snowing the next morning. The soft white flakes drifted endlessly down from the clouds,

blotting out all but the nearest of the forest trees. As they travelled, Smith could see nothing but the snow, the dim tracery of leafless branches and darkly looming evergreens. In every village, wide-eyed Indian children gathered to stare. Smith was able to make friends with some of the children, but the women, although curious, too, warily kept their distance. At each village, the priest, or medicine man, chanted, danced, shook his rattles, and scattered his magic powders about Smith continuously, as though trying to weave some spell.

Once an old man came close and looked at Smith searchingly. Opechancanough explained that many years before white men off a ship had kidnapped three Indians from this village. They wondered if Smith could be that ship's Captain.

"But he says it was not you," the chief reported. "He was stouter and his beard was not yellow."

At last they arrived at Werewocomoco. Twenty long, arch-roofed communal houses stood among snow-covered cornfields beside the broad, tidal Pamunkey River. Smith had expected to be taken before the Powhatan at once. Instead, he was led to another lodge and seated alone upon a mat before a blazing fire. A moment later, a huge Indian darted in. His face was covered with oil and black paint and he wore a head-dress of snakes and weasel skins stuffed with moss. The tails were tied together to form a tassel on the top of his head and the bodies dangled about his face, head and shoulders.

When he had danced once around the fire, spreading a circle of meal as he went, three others joined him, then three more. They sat down facing Smith and began a long chant, keeping time with their rattles while the first-comer, their leader, spread a

circle of grains of corn, ground corn meal, and small, smooth sticks in an intricate pattern about the fire, chanting and groaning all the while. Sometimes his eyes rolled back in his head. Sometimes he raised his arms high, straining his muscles so that sweat streamed from him. The ceremony was repeated for two more days. It was designed to offset any magic with which Smith might harm the Powhatan, they told him.

And then, at last, John Smith was led through the trampled snow of the village to the long-roofed house of the Great Powhatan. Though far larger than the other Indian dwellings, it differed from them in little else. There was the same low doorway curtained with mats, the same dark interior, thick with smoke and the strong, rank scent of poorly-cured furs and unwashed, oiled bodies. The only light came from a central fire and it took Smith's eyes a moment to pierce the dimness. He felt his heart beating hard as he looked about him. What sort of man would he be, this Indian king, this savage emperor?

For all its size, at least sixty feet long, the house was crowded. Rows of warriors lined the walls, staring at the white man. At the far end, near the fire, huddled a group of wide-eyed women and children. All the women were young and shapely. Red paint covered their heads and shoulders, the soft white down of birds adorned their long black hair, heavy chains of white beads and pearls hung about their necks and wrists. It was plain that the great chieftain chose only the comeliest girls in his territories for his harem.

And the Powhatan himself? He sat on a raised couch wrapped in a great cloak of racoon fur with the two most richly adorned of his wives on either

hand. His hair was grey, his face was deeply trenched by time, but there was dignity in every line of it. Silently the two faced each other, the erect, golden-bearded soldier from across the sea and the fierce old pagan surrounded by his warriors. Bold blue eyes looked with a bright, commanding stare into opaque, unfathomable black ones. As he gazed Smith felt a chill like a cold breath creep along his spine. This may be an ignorant savage but he's a match for us all, he thought. He's not to be beguiled by toys or frightened by tricks. In the Powhatan's face he could read cruelty, shrewdness, intelligence, subtlety—even humour. Beyond and above everything else, intense, insatiable pride.

The Powhatan had begun to speak in a deep, deliberate voice.

"Why have you and your people come into *my* land?" he said.

Smith hesitated. Behind him he heard the fire crackle as a log broke and fell. The Powhatan's question had given him a cue, but how to use it? "*My* land," he had said. He looked upon the coming of the English from the single point of view of his own personal loss or gain.

If Smith could convince him that the white men were only here by accident, surely he would think it more worth his while to trade peaceably with them than to attack Jamestown. When Captain Newport arrived with reinforcements, he might discover his mistake, but it would be too late. The colonists would be strong enough by then to protect themselves.

Carefully framing the words, Smith told his fabricated tale. The English ships had been attacked by their enemies, the Spaniards, he explained, and had

conquered them in a great sea battle. Damage to their ships, however, had forced them to put in to shore, and an attack by the Chesapeake Indians led them to move from the Capes. At Kecoughtan the Indians had told them that they could find fresh water farther up the river. Their ship, the pinnace, being leaky, they were forced to stay to mend her. But soon Captain Newport, their Chief and father, would come in other, larger ships to fetch them all away again.

The Powhatan listened attentively, and once or twice he nodded in agreement. He is checking my story with what his spies have told him, Smith thought.

"But why did you go farther up my river in your boat?" he demanded, when Smith paused.

"To see if that river would lead us to our enemies, the Monacans," Smith answered boldly.

"Your enemies?" The old chief lifted his head and his eyes were suddenly alert. "Are the Monacans your enemies?"

"Yes. On the other side of this land, on the sea of salt water, my father, Captain Newport, had a son slain by the Indians," Smith said. "They were Monacans and we wish to be revenged."

The Monacans were Powhatan's deadly foes. If Smith could make him believe that the white men were possible allies, it might swing the balance.

Powhatan gave a non-committal grunt, but he looked at Smith with a peculiar, measuring stare, such a look as a gambler might give to a new and dangerously skilful adversary.

Have I overplayed my hand? Smith wondered, and the coldness stirred again along his spine. But

he kept his gaze as confident as ever under the chief's long scrutiny.

At last Powhatan made a gesture. A mat was spread on the ground before the fire for Smith, while the Powhatan's warriors gathered about him. Smith could hear their voices in earnest talk but not what they were saying.

Meanwhile the children and some of the young women began to move closer to Smith. They whispered to each other and their eyes followed every move he made. One girl-child, slim and delicately fashioned as a fawn, seemed bolder than the rest. She reached out and touched his hand, then drew her own hand back and looked at her fingertips as though expecting to see them coloured with whatever made his skin so strangely pale.

Smith smiled into the pretty, childish face, then held out a morsel of food, as though to a shy animal.

But she would not take it nor come nearer, only sat crouched with her brief skirt of cunningly sewn feathers spread about her, red lips parted over little white teeth, breath coming fast, eyes wide and shining with wonder. Eyes—he suddenly thought—as dark, yet full of light as Charatza's had been, so long ago!

Now the consultation of warriors was finished and the women and children scurried back to their places. Some men shouldered their way through the crowd and disappeared outside to return almost at once carrying two flat, darkly stained rocks, which they laid on the ground before the Powhatan. Smith was seized suddenly, dragged forward, and flung on his back with his head on the stones. Above him towered two warriors, each with a heavy war club poised in his hands.

This was to be his end, then ? His old acquaintance, Death, whom he had met and evaded so often, had cornered him at last here in the snowy wilderness. This time there could be no escape, and he must meet his fate bravely. He tried to pray, but, instead, his mother's face leapt into his mind.

Did he hear her voice, also ? No, the voice was lighter, younger, and the hurried words were alien. It was interrupted by the Powhatan's deep tones and Smith saw the warriors swing their clubs high.

Suddenly there was a rush of feet, someone dropped down beside him. Arms encircled his neck and a head was laid on his own. The warriors stood frozen, their startled faces turned to their chief. Smith felt the slim, smooth arms tighten, then relax, as the Powhatan spoke again.

Now the warriors were pulling him to his feet. Dazed, he looked about him. The girl-child who had touched his hand was holding his arm tightly. Powhatan was smiling ; he seemed wryly amused.

" You may live now, white captain," he said. " You were to be killed in revenge for my brother's men whom you shot with your pistol. But this child of mine, this Pocahontas, is afraid of nothing, not the warriors' judgment or their clubs or even her old father ! Our women have the right to claim a condemned captive for their own. Of course, at twelve summers she is young to use that right but "—he shrugged—" I cannot refuse *her* anything, for she is the flower of my heart, the dearest jewel of my old age."

Still unable to believe that Death had passed him by again, Smith looked down into the small, upturned face. She gave a bubbling laugh, ducked her head and rubbed it against his sleeve like a playful kitten.

Then she turned and ran to fling her arms about Powhatan's neck and press her soft cheek against his wrinkled old one. The grim and cruel face softened for a moment into an indulgent smile before he put her from him gently.

"In four days I will send you home. My daughter has claimed you for a second father so you are my kinsman and you are among your own people."

Smith drew a deep breath.

"You are a great chief, Powhatan," he said, surprised to hear his voice sound clear and steady. "I will not forget that you have been my friend. Pocahontas shall be as my dearest child, and I will be proud to call you father, also."

This answer seemed to please the Powhatan and all his warriors, for they nodded, then burst out with a loud, prolonged shout like a cheer. It acted as a signal. Immediately women entered bringing platters of food, and Smith was able to eat with a good appetite for the first time in many weeks.

The next two days passed pleasantly. The people welcomed Smith into their homes, proud to show him all they had and to answer his questions about their lives and customs. Powhatan was no less curious to hear Smith tell of the white men's country, their numbers, their weapons and the ships whose great white sails had brought them across the sea. Smith never had more eager listeners than those gathered about the fire in the arch-roofed hut while the winter wind whistled down through the smoke-hole, scattering the ashes and sending the sparks whirling.

The Powhatan told Smith horrifying details of the fate of some of his other prisoners, smiling as he watched the Englishman's face.

"In my treasure house of Orapaks I have kept a tally of my dead enemies," he said. "Their long scalp locks and enough skin sliced from their heads to hold the hair in place. I have some, freshly taken, drying now. Come and see them."

On a line stretched between two trees twenty such grisly mementoes hung stiffly in the cold air.

Smith's gorge rose at the sight. But, he reasoned, was it worse than the Turks' heads on the wall at Regall, for instance, or the heads over the gate of the Tower of London itself? He was no judge.

On the third day Smith was led into a great, empty house, seated upon a mat by the fire and left alone. Another large mat divided the interior of the house in half, and from behind it the Powhatan appeared suddenly. His face was blackened and streaked with paint and a group of priests and medicine men followed him. Solemnly they danced, circling about the fire and Smith, chanting and tossing their arms to the muted music of drums and rattles. Then they carefully sifted patterns of corn meal and coloured powders through their fingers upon the ground.

"Now you are my son indeed," Powhatan announced. "This dance has made you a werowance, a chief of my people. When you go home, I will send some of my men with you and you shall give them two of your great thunder weapons and one of your round stones to grind corn for me. When you return here, I will give you a fine country to rule over for your own, called Capowosick. You shall be as dear to me as my son Nantaquond, for ever."

Then the Powhatan led him behind the curtaining mat to show him his storehouse. Here were piled

baskets full of corn, beans, seeds, nuts, precious puccoon roots with which the Indians painted themselves red, pearls, copper, beads, shells, strings of dried, thinly sliced meat, turkey feathers, furs, deer-skins—tribute brought to the Powhatan by his subject tribes.

"At Orapaks I have three such storehouses, all full," he boasted. "Where others go hungry in the winter, the Powhatan can feast and grow fat. At Uttamussack on the Pamunkey, the house of my Okee stands on a hilltop with the tombs of my ancestors, all filled with treasures. When you bring me the guns, I will let you see them. They are holy places. No one dares to visit them but my priests and my chieftains."

At the feast following the ceremony, Pocahontas sat beside Smith, helping herself to choice morsels from his platter.

"Now that you are my countryman, I'll tell you my name. My father calls me Pocahontas—it means 'the lively one,' but my true name is Mataoka. What is yours?"

"John Smith," he told her. "Captain—that means werowance—John Smith."

She shaped the words with her red lips, then laughed aloud at the odd sound. She was always laughing, always moving like sunlight on water or wind in forest leaves.

"I'm sorry you are going away tomorrow, Captain-John-Smith," she said, slurring the syllables together into one long word. "But you will come again, and soon I shall go to your village to see you and all your treasures."

"When you come, bring some baskets and I'll fill them with little copper bells to make you

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bracelets, and white beads to make you chains," he promised.

She looked at him with her clear, bright fawn's eyes.

"I'll come soon, Captain-John-Smith," she said.

Chapter nine



THE next day Smith set out overland with four Indian guides carrying loads of bread and venison. They arrived at Jamestown the following morning. The men on guard at the fort set up a jubilant shout at sight of Smith whole and unharmed. Samuel Collier couldn't hold back tears of joy and Smith felt his own eyes sting as the boy's thin arms hugged him. George Percy, Master Hunt, John Martin, Thomas Wotton the surgeon, Anas Todkill—how good it was to see them as they gathered round to wring his hands!

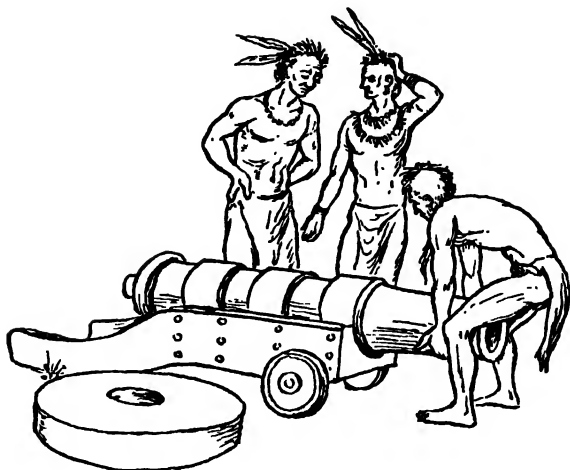
President Ratcliffe and Master Archer alone stood aloof, and their greetings were thin-lipped smiles.

"Archer was made a member of the Council when you were thought to be dead," Sam Collier whispered. "He thinks he'll lose his office now you're back."

Smith did not forget his promise to Powhatan. He led his Indian guides to two massive demi-culverins, the largest of their cannon.

"Take them, they are my gifts to the Powhatan," he said. "This millstone, too."

The four red men stared blankly at the cannon,



then at the heavy stone. They made a few half-hearted efforts but could not stir them in their places.

"Perhaps you'd like to see how we use the guns?" Smith asked, and they nodded eagerly.

One of the demi-culverins was forthwith loaded with stones and discharged. The sound of the explosion and the sight of the missiles hitting an icicle-covered tree and bringing great branches of it crashing down so terrified the savages that they took to their heels into the woods. Smith hurried after to assure them that they would not be harmed, gave them a good meal of the white men's food, loaded them with more portable gifts and sent them happily on their way.

Lieutenant Percy took Smith aside that evening.

"Ratcliffe and Archer are still bound to return in the pinnace to England. Only the fact that the gear is frozen fast with ice has kept them here. Perhaps you can persuade them——"

Smith grinned. "My argument is blunt. Stay or be sunk in the river."

Ratcliffe seemed sulkily resigned to let the matter rest, but Archer answered with a vicious snarl.

"You take the law into your hands very freely, Captain Smith. Let me tell you of one which you yourself have broken—the Levitical Law. A captain who leads his men into needless danger is answerable for their deaths. Robinson and Emry were slain because of your rash orders. You are guilty of murder, John Smith, and you shall hang for it!"

Ratcliffe's dull eyes brightened.

"Is that truly the law?" he asked.

"I can cite you page and line," Archer answered.

"Then I pronounce you under arrest, Captain Smith," Ratcliffe said. "Tomorrow we'll hold a trial and we'll see what answer you can make to that."

Smith was silent while he tried to weigh this new problem. How could he submit tamely once again to a trumped-up trial? And yet among such a turbulent crew revolt against authority would lead only to chaos and ruin. He had never hesitated to face death when it blocked a road he believed he should take. The thing, John Smith told himself, was to stand fast for the right and let God decide the issue.

"Very well, I am your prisoner," he said.

He was put into the pinnace under guard. Wingfield received him haughtily.

"They might have spared me this humiliation—to be quartered with a low-born rogue on his way to the gallows. In England I would scorn to impose such company on my serving man," he said.

But Smith was too weary for wrangling. He had made his decision and all he wanted was sleep.

Smith was awakened next morning by the sound of thunder. No, it was cannon ! Were they Spaniards—Kendall's allies come too late to save him—or Frenchmen ? He stumbled from his hammock and up to the icy deck. Then the sound of cheering echoed from the shore and he saw the ship, a fine, tall ship, inexpressibly beautiful in the pale winter sunlight with the blessed red crosses of St. George and England blazing on her banners !

Captain Newport had returned at last. He reported that another ship, the *Phoenix*, had come with him, but that off Cape Henry they had been separated by a storm and he feared her lost. Newport's arrival made short work of the charge against Smith. Among the passengers was a lawyer better versed in his profession than Archer, and he laughed the accusation out of court.

After his first reaction of relief, Smith looked more soberly at the new colonists. As before, the great majority were gentlemen. Of the few skilled artisans they brought, six were tailors, two goldsmiths, two refiners, one a jeweller and one, of all things, a perfumer ! The one blacksmith, one gunner, two apothecaries, two surgeons and one cooper he welcomed gladly. The rest were either unskilled at any trade or else the footmen and valets of the gentlemen.

"Jewellers, goldsmiths, refiners ? Why have you brought so many of them ?" he asked Captain Newport.

Newport shrugged his shoulders.

"The Council in London was hard pressed to raise funds for this voyage. Then I hinted that we had found a gold mine and, behold, the money poured in like water ! I had to bring these fellows to work the metal, so there you are."

"And when they learn how you've tricked them, what then?" Smith demanded.

"By then we may have discovered our mine. I had samples of the ore, which the savages told us came from the land of the Potomacks, assayed, and they were found to contain a little silver." Newport smiled. "And that's a problem for you with your taste for exploration. At any rate, I've saved you once again from a hanging!"

And there was no reply Smith could make to that.

The first week after Newport's arrival passed swiftly. The ship had brought news and letters from home—many of them addressed to men now lying quiet under the snow. The veteran colonists took pleasure in filling the newcomers' ears with the wonders of the strange new country and with tales of their own exploits. None could tell such stories as William White, the boy who had lived among the Indians. He always had a circle around him made up of envious youngsters.

The ship had brought replacements of fowls and domestic animals, of tools, clothing, long-unfamiliar foods and of wine, beer, sack and brandy. A too-free use of these last one night brought the colony almost to disaster. Careless revellers set fire to the thatch of one of the huts. A high wind was blowing, and in less than half an hour most of the huts were burned to the ground, including the storehouse full of corn, Master Hunt's library of books and a large section of the palisade.

There was nothing for it but to set to building again, and in this they at least had the aid of Captain Newport's ships' carpenters. The loss of their corn was no less serious. While the Council was deliberating over the problem, a file of Indians appeared at

the edge of the clearing. One man advanced alone, calling out the name of Captain Smith.

Smith recognized the Powhatan's trusted servant, Rawhunt.

"The Powhatan's daughter has brought presents of bread and venison for you," Rawhunt told him.

It was indeed Pocahontas who had come the twelve miles through the snowy woods in her high, deerskin moccasins to see her new "father." As the daughter of the powerful savage chieftain, the little forest princess was welcomed with deference by the white men—deference which she received with a touching and innocent dignity. The food she brought them in their need warmed every man's heart to her, and she herself was the prettiest and most charming thing they had seen in all this wild land. There was no one in the least like her, none to match her either in looks or quickness of understanding. "The nonpareil of Virginia," one of the more learned gentlemen called her. No wonder she held the old Powhatan's affection completely and was the favourite of all his many children!

They sent her home with her servants loaded down with gifts of beads and copper, hatchets and knives. Within three days Rawhunt was back again with more turkeys and venison and also with a message from the Powhatan, inviting Captain Newport to visit him at Werewocomoco.

During all the rest of that winter not a week passed without a visit from Pocahontas bringing bountiful supplies, and each time it was "Captain-John-Smith" for whom she brought them—which he as regularly turned into the common store. She called him always "father" and it was plain that she felt

that there was a strong and permanent bond between them.

As soon as she lost her first shyness, she made friends with Sam Collier and the other young boys. She taught them her Indian games, romped, laughed, even turned cartwheels with them through the public square (to the dismay and distress of good Master Hunt).

With forty men, Newport, Smith, and Master Scrivener, a newcomer now elected to the Council, set out late in February in the pinnace to visit Powhatan. When they arrived off Werewocomoco, the river bank seemed to be full of painted Indians shouting and singing.

"It may be a trap," Newport said uneasily. "I'll not go ashore among all those devils!"

"Why, man, they're welcoming you in the best way they know," Smith assured him.

Newport was so reluctant to leave the shelter of the pinnace, however, that Smith offered to make sure that all was well. He chose a dozen volunteers. Armed and wearing their heavy leather jackets they rowed ashore in a small boat while the Indians thronged to greet them. There was no doubt in Smith's mind that these fellows were friendly, but, to impress them, he formed his men into ranks on the shore, then marched them with even step into the village.

While his men stood with grounded muskets outside the door, Smith entered the Powhatan's great house. The chief received him as before, on his throne-like couch in his mantle of furs. When Smith appeared, Pocahontas ran forward to meet him.

"See, I am wearing the copper bells you gave me

on my bracelets. They make a sweet sound, like falling water," she said.

Smith presented Powhatan with gifts—a white greyhound, a scarlet jacket and a broad-brimmed hat with a feather and a buckle. Although the old savage seemed pleased, Smith noticed that he took care not to touch any of the presents until his servants had first examined them carefully.

"And where are those great guns you promised to send me?" the Powhatan asked, a smile twitching at the corners of his mouth.

"I gave the largest guns we had to your messengers, as I promised. But they refused to take them away with them," Smith answered, looking him blandly in the eye.

The Powhatan threw back his head and laughed.

"You gave them what they could not carry. Next time send me smaller ones," he said. "Now bring your warriors in for me to see."

Smith presented his soldiers two by two, and the Powhatan ordered that each of them be given four or five pounds of bread.

"But tell them to lay their arms down at my feet as my own people do," he said.

"That is a ceremony our enemies may wish to see, but never our friends," Smith answered. "It is our custom to wear our arms at all times."

The old chief met his gaze and something crossed his face like a shadow. Then he was smiling.

"And where is Captain Newport?" he asked. "Does he know our language, as you do?"

"No," Smith answered. "But I will be here when he comes tomorrow. Since I have become your son, you may trust me to translate truly what you say to each other."

The white men were entertained for the rest of the day with feasting, dances, and Indian games. One, very like the English football, was played only by the women and children. The men had another in which they kicked a smaller ball to see who could send it the farthest. They were eager gamblers, also, with small smooth sticks instead of cards and dice.

Smith sent word to Newport the next morning that all was well. Knowing the Indians' love of pageantry, Smith suggested that the men wear full armour and that the ship's drummer and trumpeter walk before Newport playing their instruments. The savages were delighted with the strange new sounds, and trooped after the procession as it marched up from the shore.

With Newport came his cabin-boy, Thomas Salvage, a lively, bold-eyed youngster. The old ruler took an interest in the boy, and Smith, on an impulse, introduced him as Newport's son. Powhatan called forward his own young son, Nantaquond, of whom he was very proud, and with reason. Never, even among the statues in ancient Rome, had Smith seen anything to match the bronze perfection of the young chief's body.

"They are the same age, I think," the Powhatan said. "They would make good companions on the hunt."

Smith translated the Chief's words and saw an eager gleam kindle in young Thomas's eyes. Then Smith brought up the subject of trading for corn.

"You have such plenty in your great storehouses, and we'd like to buy from you," Smith told him.

"Yes, my people told me of your fire," the Powhatan answered. Little of what went on in Jamestown failed to reach the Emperor's ears, Smith knew.

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If only the colonists had as good sources of information——

But the Powhatan was speaking again.

"Tell Captain Newport that it is beneath mighty chiefs to trade like peddlers. Let me see all of what you have brought. What I wish I will take, and I will give you what I think fitting in return."

Smith translated this to Newport, adding :

"The old fellow is shrewd. Don't let this flattery cheat you into playing his game."

But Newport would not listen.

"I must not be outdone in dignity by a naked, painted savage," he answered.

To Smith's dismay he ordered the entire stock they had brought spread out at the old man's feet. Whereupon the Powhatan blandly presented, in return, four small basketfuls of corn when they had expected at least twenty hogsheads !

Newport went crimson. He had been fairly beaten and he knew it.

"Well, it's only corn," he said aside to Smith in an attempt at lightness.

"Only corn !" Smith answered, his eyes blazing. "If you had seen your comrades dying for the lack of it—— !"

Suddenly he remembered that he still had about him a bag of trinkets he had brought especially for Pocahontas. He opened the bag slowly, fumbled inside, then drew forth an ordinary copper chain. From it dangled, as though caught by accident, a string of sky-blue beads. He untangled it and stuffed it back into the bag.

"What was that ?" the Powhatan demanded, leaning forward to see better.

"A fine copper chain," Smith held it up proudly.

"No. That in the bag. Those beads. I like the colour."

Smith smiled but shook his head.

"Those beads are not for sale, but I'm sure you'll like this copper chain. See how it shines!"

"I have more than enough copper. Let me look at those beads. I might want them."

"What is the use of showing them to you? They are not for sale," Smith protested.

"Why did you bring them here if they are not for sale?" the Powhatan asked sharply.

"They are too precious to leave behind. I carry them with me everywhere. See, they are blue as the morning sky—a rare colour. Only the greatest kings and chiefs can wear them or give them to their wives. When a woman wears these sky-blue beads, everyone knows that she belongs to the mightiest prince in all the land."

There was a stir and a rustle among the Powhatan's women. They moved closer. One of the two who shared his throne touched his arm and the other whispered something in his ear.

"What will you do with those beads if you do not sell them?" the Powhatan demanded.

"I will take them back to England and present them to King James, before whom Captain Newport and I and every Englishman fall on our knees."

"Must he have them all?"

Smith hesitated.

"Well—since you and your daughter are so dear to my heart, I might sell you a few——"

Back and forth the bargaining went for the better part of an hour. At the end of it over two hundred bushels of corn were loaded into the pinnacle. Smith was dripping with sweat under his heavy leather

jacket. A string of blue beads adorned the Powhatan, each of the two pretty young women who sat beside him, and, of course, Pocahontas, too.

Pleased with what he felt was his triumph, the Powhatan made plans with Newport for a military alliance against his enemies, the Monacans. Moreover, he confirmed what Smith had heard before of the great salt water far beyond the mountains, of the strangely clothed men at Ocanahonan and the far-distant land of Anone where the houses had walls of stone, and the people wore pale, shining copper.

Then the Powhatan offered to send his servant, Namontack, with Newport as hostage for Thomas Salvage, to whom he had taken a strong fancy. He would lodge the boy with his own son and treat him with equal favour. Thomas Salvage was keen for the adventure, for he had envied William White his month with the Indians. Smith took him aside and explained also the priceless service he could render by learning the Indian language and keeping Jamestown informed of the Powhatan's actions. The boy promised to do his best.

The exchange was made, and the white men departed. On the way they stopped to trade for more corn with Opechancanough, then continued on to Jamestown.

They reached the fort on March 9, a day of brilliant sun and high, fast-flying clouds.

"They haven't made much progress in rebuilding," Smith said as they anchored and came ashore.

Soon they learned the cause. In the sands of a nearby stream sparkling grains had been discovered. At the cry of "Gold!" every other task was abandoned. The corn brought in the pinnace got scarcely a glance.

"We could use those baskets to carry the sand in," one of the men suggested, and it was all that Smith could do to prevent him from dumping the corn upon the ground.

The refiners, however, shook their heads.

"It is yellow and it glitters, but it is like no gold I ever saw," one said.

John Martin quieted him sharply. His thin, haggard face was feverish.

"My father worked in the royal mint, and I say that it *is* gold!" he declared.

The refiners, jewellers and goldsmiths shrugged and were silent. There was a ferocity among the men who were digging that was close to madness.

"If I die, bury me here in this sand so that my bones may turn to gold!" one wild fellow cried.

Argument was useless. Even Captain Newport caught the infection and decided that the cedar-wood, sassafras and furs he had planned to take back to England should all be left behind to make room for the golden earth. To Smith's protests he answered:

"Even if it's not pure gold, I'll have something to show the Council."

The fact that the refiners could extract nothing in the least like gold from the sand finally cooled some of the men's ardour, but others could not be convinced.

"Their furnaces are faulty. In England they'll be able to extract the metal and our fortunes will be made."

Meanwhile the houses stood half-finished, the palisade incomplete, the fields unplanted. Smith was black-browed and bitter. Almost singlehanded he set about preparing the ground for seed, and after a

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while more men came out to help him in spite of the jeers of the gold-miners.

“Waste your time digging dirt when you could be digging gold! You’re all fools!” one of them shouted.

A group even went to President Ratcliffe and demanded that Smith be made to help load the golden sand into the ship. But not one of them offered to be the first to force this task upon the formidable captain.

Chapter ten



ON April 10, 1608, the ship was ready to sail. Besides the holdful of gilded dirt, she bore three passengers, Wingfield, Gabriel Archer, and Namontack, the Powhatan's servant. He carried a stick, given him by the Powhatan's own hands, on which he planned to keep tally of all the men he saw in England of fighting age. The Powhatan wished to know the exact war strength of this King James.

Smith, Percy and Scrivener took out the pinnace and accompanied Newport's vessel as far as Cape Henry.

"I want to see the last of those two worthies," Smith said, grinning. "The air of Virginia smells fresher to me already, now that they're over the horizon!"

Percy nodded.

"And yet—I wonder what tales they will tell when they reach England. Wingfield has many powerful friends and Archer's a glib rogue. They'll justify themselves, probably by blackening us."

"Who cares what they say in far-off London?" Smith answered. "But, for that matter, I've sent

along a letter to one of my own friends in the London Council, giving an account of all that has happened here since our arrival—all that seemed to me of general interest."

On their way back to Jamestown they explored a river, called Nansamond, which entered the James near its mouth. They found the Indians willing to trade, and loaded the pinnace once again with corn.

"Let Martin keep his gilded dirt, this is the treasure for *me*!" Smith said, running the grains lovingly through his fingers. "I'm as greedy for this as any Spaniard ever was for gold."

They returned to Jamestown and settled to the task of planting corn and felling trees to rebuild the village. Rawhunt, the Powhatan's messenger, soon arrived bringing ten fine turkeys for Captain Smith. Smith gave him a generous load of trinkets in return, but he looked displeased.

"My master wants swords," he explained. "Captain Newport sent him twenty swords for twenty turkeys."

"Tell him we have no more swords to spare," Smith said, and Rawhunt went sullenly away.

Newport had sailed off, out of reach of the mischief his swords might do, Smith thought bitterly.

Then the planters began to miss tools, weapons, pieces of clothing, anything left unwatched for a moment. The Indian thieves moved as silently as shadows, and could dodge and outrun the Englishmen. Ratcliffe finally called a Council meeting to consider the problem.

"Our orders from England are plain. We must stop this practice, but by gentle means, and do nothing to rouse their enmity."

Smith spoke up.

" Their own rulers punish stealing by flogging and even death. Your kindness seems to them only cowardly weakness."

" But what can we do ? " John Martin's voice was anxious. " We must remember the Council's order."

" Let one of them meddle with *me* and my memory will desert me like a flash ! " Smith promised. " And the fellow I catch will get something *he* won't forget."

That same afternoon Smith caught a young warrior trying to make off with two swords. He dragged him to the central square, shackled him to a post and whipped him soundly with a rope's end. He left him there until sunset, then turned him loose with a stern warning.

The next day while Smith was at work felling trees, some Indians appeared suddenly among them brandishing swords. One was the culprit of the day before. He attacked Smith, but had so little skill with his weapon that the Captain knocked it out of his grasp with his axe. By this time, soldiers arrived with muskets and the Indians fled to the woods.

" Fire into the tops of the trees," Smith ordered. " Scare them soundly while we're at it."

At the rattle of musket fire, another Indian, who had been skulking inside the fort, appeared and flung himself at Captain Smith's feet.

" Get up, we'll do you no harm," Smith assured him. " But go and tell your friends that I'll whip any thieves I catch, and if even one of my men is harmed, I'll hunt the Indian who did it up and down the land with muskets, burn his house and destroy his boats. Now, *Utteke* ! Get you gone ! "

The man ran like a hare. Soon the Indians

reappeared out of the woods declaring that they wished peace with Captain Smith.

"The weirs you have built to catch fish are broken. We will mend them for you," one savage suggested, and they set to work, pathetically anxious to please him.

The news spread swiftly. Within three days, a runner returned a hatchet stolen from the white men when they stopped at the village of Nansamond, thirty miles away.

"The power of Captain Smith is very terrible," the messenger said. "My chief is your friend."

When Smith assured him all was well, he went home in high spirits.

The stealing did not stop altogether, but it grew less. Seven thieves were captured and confessed that they had been acting on the orders of the Powhatan.

"He wishes to get all your weapons from you," they said. "You did not go away in the ships, as you said at first. You have come here to take our country from us, he says, and you must be destroyed."

"I can't whip these poor devils for obeying their Emperor," Smith said.

But he kept them locked up, nevertheless.

On the morning of April 20th, a sentry's shout brought them all to attention. Was it an Indian attack? The cry rang out again:

"Sail ho! An English ship is coming up the river!"

She was the long-lost *Phœnix*. The storm had blown her as far as the West Indies, but she had weathered it safely and had not lost a man. What was more, they had found food there, so that they

had not used up the stores intended for Jamestown, which made them doubly welcome.

Smith watched the newcomers row ashore and saw the same looks of delight with which he and his fellow veterans had hailed their first view of Virginia a year ago. It was no wonder! Spring had come at last and with a rush. The sky was cloudless, the river sparkled, the forests were bright with budding leaves. Between the stumps of the felled trees on the Jamestown peninsula, the earth of their fields looked warm and rich, with here and there an emerald blade of corn.

• Lovely, softly smiling land! There was no hint that the trees of the forest hid anything but drifting dogwood blossoms and carpets of vines and wild strawberries, or that a crueller and more treacherous foe than even the Powhatan lurked in the fever-mists of the river.

While the *Phoenix* was making repairs for its return journey, the old dispute over the gold arose again. Master Martin was all for loading this vessel, too, with the yellow sand. Smith was against it. Captain Nelson listened to the refiners' and goldsmiths' reports and said that, for his own part, he preferred the cedar-wood planks now ready to anything so uncertain as the sand.

"But I'll let your Council decide," he finished amiably, which left the problem still unsolved.

Then Martin urged Ratcliffe to send Smith on an exploring trip to the country above the Falls. It was plain that he wanted him out of the way. Without his opposition, he might bring the Council to his opinion. The bickering continued in the close little room until a sentry's alarm brought them all to their feet.

"There's a crowd of savages gathering at the neck of the peninsula," the guard reported.

Smith hurried to the lookout's platform on the wall. He could see the Indians clearly—several hundred of them, he judged. Most had bows and arrows, but many swords flashed among them—white men's swords.

Now two of their number approached the fort with their arms raised, weaponless, signifying peace.

"We have captured two of your men. We want you to return the seven warriors whom you are keeping prisoner. If not, we will kill these white men first and then all of you in the fort, also," the Indians said.

A count was taken quickly. Two of the men of the new supply were missing. Smith remembered them—a couple of hard-eyed braggarts who had sneered at the orders against straying in the woods. They would sneer no longer—if they lived through this!

Ratcliffe stood pulling his beard uncertainly; Martin's face was pale. Master Scrivener cleared his throat.

"The London Council's orders——" he began, then the words died away.

George Percy, son of the great fighting House of Northumberland, turned with swift recognition of leadership to John Smith, the tenant-farmer's son. Smith spoke decisively.

"Take charge of the fort, Lieutenant. Keep your matches burning but hold your fire. If we don't return and they make an assault on the gate, shoot them down with the cannon, but for no other reason."

Then, leading a quickly mustered squad, Smith sallied out and charged straight at the Indians, direct-

ing volleys of musket fire over their heads as he advanced.

For a moment the throng of savages stood their ground. Then, as the musket balls began to bring down leaves from the trees above them, they broke and ran. Smith followed and ranged through the woods for more than an hour. Spent arrows struck him and a few of his men, but none with enough force to draw blood. They found and captured five Indians and returned to the fort.

Almost immediately the messengers reappeared.

"We have brought back your men, Captain Smith. Your thunder weapons are too powerful for us. We want only peace with you, now and for ever."

The two white men came forward. They were pale and subdued but unhurt. Smith looked them over carefully while the Indians waited.

"It is well for you that they are safe. Remember what I said before—and go!" he said at last sternly.

"We will remember, Captain Smith," they answered, and fled.

The men set up a cheer as Smith reappeared inside the fort.

"Thanks, lads," he answered. "But no one should be proud of so shabby a triumph—powder and shot against poor, frightened, naked creatures. However, nobody was hurt on either side of our brave battle and that's well worth a cheer!"

But the President looked none too pleased.

"You acted without authorization from me, Captain Smith. If you have offended the Indians by your harshness, all will bear witness to that," he said.

Smith gave him one fiery blue glance, wheeled about, strode over to the well and began to draw up a bucket of water.

"Here, Sam!" he called. "Pour this over my head. There are words on my tongue that will blister the air if I let them out!"

The next afternoon more Indians appeared at the edge of the clearing. These were carrying baskets instead of weapons and in the lead came Pocahontas, escorted, as usual, by Rawhunt.

Rawhunt took Captain Smith aside.

"My master, the Great Powhatan, was sorry to learn that some of his young men have been troubling you," he said. "He has sent his dearest child to ask that you set the prisoners free. He will punish them for disobeying his orders."

Smith looked directly into the dark, opaque eyes. The Powhatan's words were false and Rawhunt knew it as well as he. Much was to be gained, however, by keeping at least the appearance of friendship. He had given a demonstration of his power, now was the time for conciliation.

"The men were caught stealing and they all deserve to die," he said at last. "But how can I deny anything to little Pocahontas? For her sake only I will spare their lives and send them back tomorrow to my friend, the great and truthful Powhatan. Tell him that, from me."

Chapter eleven



CAPTAIN NELSON of the *Phoenix* set sail on the first day of June, 1608, with a cargo of lumber. Master John Martin sailed with him. His excuse was illness, but the desire to see how his gold had been received in England was his true motive.

The Council allowed him to leave without protest. In fact, Captain Smith's vote in favour of granting him that privilege was so hearty that he drew an acid glance from Martin.

"I'll give a full report to the London Council of *your* activities, Captain Smith," he promised.

"Give my humble respects to Master Wingfield and Master Archer, also," Smith urged him. "Tell them that when last you saw me I was alive and well—and still unchanged!"

With the storehouse full, the cornfields flourishing, the Indians subdued and friendly and the men in good health, Smith's mind turned once again to exploration. Two goals had been set by the London Council. First, to search out the passage into the Western Ocean, and second, to discover gold or at least the source of the specimens of silver-bearing

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ore Newport had displayed in England. The Council met and voted him permission to depart on this double mission.

For his own part Smith had a third project in his mind—to explore Chesapeake Bay and its tributary rivers, and to make a map of the whole region. The men in London had only the haziest notion of the extent and variety of this country. One accurately drawn map would be vastly more valuable than a hundred travellers' tales.

He chose his companions carefully from those who volunteered to go with him. Once again it was necessary to leave Sam behind. The boy was running a fever, and since the trip was to be made in an open sailing barge, Smith ruled that he remain at the fort.

They left Jamestown on June 2, said farewell to the *Phoenix* on her outward voyage off Cape Henry, then crossed the bay to the eastern shore. Cape Charles they found to be a pleasant, fertile region. The local Indians, the Accomacks, spoke the language of the Powhatans. Their chief, friendly and full of laughter, entertained the white strangers lavishly. A group of islands lay close to shore to the south and west of Cape Charles in the open sea, and these his comrades insisted on naming in honour of Captain Smith.

"So plain a name can be no great gift, but they look barren enough, so perhaps they won't scorn to use it," he said, and wrote it down in his notebook.

Returning to the Bay, they rounded Cape Charles and proceeded along the eastern shore of the Chesapeake. They searched each inlet, sounded as they went and noted every possible harbour or site for a settlement. When he could learn no Indian name,

Smith called each hill, harbour or point of land after the man who had first sighted it—Keale's Hill, for Richard Keale, a young sailor, Reade's Point, for the burly blacksmith, Watkin's Point, Momford's Point, and so on.

Out in the middle of the Bay was a group of islands. They gave these the name of Russel's Isles, in honour of Dr. Walter Russel, the expedition's surgeon. They were coasting past them when thunderclouds loomed, the sky darkened and a storm struck. The peaceful blue water of the Bay was suddenly a boiling, foam-streaked green. Tossed about and drenched with the breaking waves, they barely made land on the nearest of the islands.

The next morning they searched but could find no water on it nor on any of the other isles. Since their supply had been polluted by sea water in the storm, it was necessary to find some without delay. They embarked, therefore, returned to the eastern shore and rowed up a river called Wigcocomoco. The Indians here were small of stature and their language was not that of the Powhatans. The only water they could offer came from such muddy pools that the white men would never have soiled their casks with it if there had been any other to be found.

Leaving Wigcocomoco, they put out into the Bay to explore another group of islands, and a storm arose once again with such a squall of wind that the mast was broken, the sail blown overboard and the vessel all but swamped. They made the islands somehow and stayed there two days while they repaired the mast and mended the sail, using their shirts for patches. These islands they gave the uncomplimentary name of Limbo, and crossed to the eastern shore once again.

The next river was called the Ciskarawok. The Indians who lived along its banks, and who were similar to the Wigcocomocos, began by shooting arrows at the white men's boat, but a few volleys of musket shot among the tall reeds where they were hiding frightened them inland. Smith rowed ashore to their empty village and left some of the usual trading toys.

The next day the Indians came swarming about in the friendliest manner, eager to trade for the strangers' trinkets. A few of them could speak the language of the Powhatans, and they gave Smith information about the nature of their country and the nearby tribes. Their chief enemies, they told him, were the fierce Massawomacks who lived far up a mighty river called Potomack, across the Bay. The Potomack! That was where the Indians had said that they mined their silver ore.

Along this section of the eastern shore, the Bay was shallow and broken by many barren islands, and even on the mainland the explorers were unable to find fresh water. They therefore headed across the Bay. They anchored that night off a line of high cliffs called Richard's Cliffs for Richard Keale, who had once again proved to have the keenest eyesight of them all.

The next day they continued thirty leagues northward, seeing no human inhabitants, but many deer, a few wolves and some bears. The shores were wooded and mountainous, and, most important of all, provided with plenty of fresh water. Another period of stormy weather followed. Four of the men fell ill with fever, and Smith reluctantly gave the order to turn homeward. He was disappointed not to have reached the northern limits of the Bay

where, he now felt sure, the passage into the Western Ocean would be discovered. The memory of last summer's epidemic haunted him, however, and he dared not risk a boatload of sick men in this wilderness.

On June 16 they found themselves at the mouth of a mighty river, at least nine miles from shore to shore. Could it be the Potomack? By now the sick men had recovered and no one else had succumbed, so Smith decided to continue the exploration. They had sailed at least thirty miles up the majestic stream before two Indians in a dugout canoe told them that this was, indeed, the Potomack.

Farther up the river they visited several Indian villages. Each time it was the same—first, a show of defiance, then swift and complete surrender at the first sound of the terrible "thunder weapons." They followed the Potomack as far as their boat would go, then returned and went up a smaller branch, called the Quiyough. There some Indians led Smith about ten miles over a well-worn trail inland from the river to find the "mine," a hole dug with shells and axes out of the side of a mountain. The "silver" proved to be a powder much like antimony, highly prized by the savages for painting their faces, bodies and their idols. The white men brought away as much as they could carry of the shining silvery powder and returned to their boat.

The Potomack Indians were rich in beaver, otter, marten and mink furs, and were glad to trade. With this valuable cargo and with sketches, notes and figures for his map, Smith set the course at last to Jamestown.

Over the mouth of the Rappahannock River hung

a great cloud of screaming, fighting gulls, and as the boat drew near, the men saw that the water was alive with fish. A school was being driven ahead of some unseen enemies into the shallows, where they flopped helplessly among the reeds.

"I've heard of fish so thick you could catch them with pitchforks," Smith said. "Would a sword do as well?"

He drew his weapon, drove it into the water and held it up with a fine, glittering specimen impaled on its point.

In a moment all the men were tossing fish into the boat. Taking one from his sword, Smith felt a hot stab in his wrist. The fish had struck him with its long tail, which bore a saw-like sting. The pain increased, and within a few moments his whole arm was swollen to the shoulder. The agony was beyond anything he had ever known as Dr. Russel probed again and again and smeared medicinal oil on the wound.

Waves of dizziness swept over Smith. He lost consciousness, then struggled out of it again, fighting to clear his thoughts. If this meant death, he *must* live long enough to ensure his men's safe return to Jamestown. But when he tried to speak, his voice was only a far-away whisper.

Then, miraculously, the poison began to yield to Russel's treatment and the swelling to subside. Whereupon Smith revenged himself by eating the fish for his supper, and never had he enjoyed a meal more!

They set their sail again for Jamestown in the highest spirits. Seeing Smith's bandaged arm and the boat loaded with furs, bows and arrows, spears and shields (the results of their trading), the Indians

at the mouth of the James assumed that they were trophies of war. The rumour of a great battle flew up the river faster than the barge could sail.

"Captain Smith is returning. He fought the mighty Potomacks and captured their weapons."

The pleasure of their triumphant return was short-lived. Fever had struck again at Jamestown. The newcomers were all ill. The veteran settlers had escaped the sickness, but they were in a wild turmoil. Ratcliffe, the President, had detailed men to build him a new house set off by itself in a grove of trees.

"He must have his private palace in the woods!" Percy told Smith. "Thank heaven you're back. The men have vowed to depose Ratcliffe and I think they mean to hang him."

Smith's arrival calmed the hotheads. Ratcliffe was deposed, but in legal order. Smith, the last remaining member of the original Council, was immediately elected President.

"But little work can be done in Jamestown until these sick men are able to swing tools," Smith said, in accepting. "Now's the time for us to complete the circuit of the Bay and, God willing, find the passage into the Western Ocean."

With the consent of the Council, Smith appointed Scrivener acting President in his place. He named George Percy as Scrivener's military aide, gathered his adventurous crew together once again and left Jamestown on July 24 in the sailing barge.

They were following the shoreline north of the Potomack's mouth when, crossing the Bay towards them, appeared seven boats filled with Indians. They moved swiftly over the water and the shape of the canoes was unfamiliar.

"Those aren't dugouts," Richard Keale said. "They seem to be fashioned out of the bark of trees."

"Massawomacks!" Smith exclaimed, remembering what he had heard of that formidable tribe. "Prepare for a fight."

The canoes suddenly swerved and made for their camp on land without offering battle. Smith ordered the barge to follow and to anchor near the shore, just out of arrow range. They could see the Indians, gathered at the water's edge, staring at their strange craft. After a consultation, two of the savages put off unarmed in a canoe and paddled out to the barge.

Smith gave them presents and showed what he had to trade. Soon others arrived bringing venison, bear meat, fish, bows and arrows; clubs, bearskins, baskets, tobacco pipes and shields. All their tools and weapons were fashioned far more skilfully than those of any Indians the white men had met before. Their canoes were works of art—light, graceful, easy to manoeuvre and made of white bark sewn together and kept watertight with gum from trees.

When Smith tried by signs to learn whether they knew of a route through to the great Western Ocean, they claimed no knowledge of any such place. By the next morning they had broken camp. They and their canoes had disappeared, and the English continued on their way.

The next tribe of Indians the explorers encountered, the Tockwagh, had many metal hatchets, knives and pieces of iron and brass. They explained that they had traded these articles from the Susquehannocks. This famous tribe lived more than two days' journey farther up the river than the barge

could go, and Smith persuaded the Tockwaghs to send word to them to come and trade.

After days of waiting in the village of the friendly Tockwaghs, about sixty Susquehannocks arrived, bringing goods for trade. They were by far the tallest and most stalwart Indians the white men had yet seen. They had heard a rumour that Smith had conquered the Massawomacks and they begged him to join them as their war chief. Before he knew what they were doing, they had put a necklace of white beads weighing at least five pounds about his neck and a huge mantle of bears' skins over him, in token of his election. He contented them by promising to return the next year. Both tribes then vowed to give him a tribute of corn if he would come after harvest-time to get it.

Through the interpreters they described the course of their river above the falls that had halted the barge. It flowed for a vast distance inland to its source in the mountains, they said, but it led to no salt water, nor had they heard of any Western Sea. Their hatchets and brass came from the Frenchmen of Canada, they told him.

The white men continued the circuit of the Chesapeake until they had explored every inlet and river as far as the barge could float. At each of their farthest points of exploration they either left a wooden cross, cut a mark, or nailed a piece of brass to a tree to claim the territory for King James. All this, Smith knew, was of little worth compared to their failure to find the North-west Passage. But at least the men were in the best of health, had learned how to sustain themselves in the wilderness and had made friends with many tribes of Indians.

More important, to Smith's mind, were the

material he had assembled for his map and the promises of corn at harvest-time from a score of tribes.

"We'll take the pinnace and barge and load them up," he planned. "We'll not go hungry this winter, of that I mean to make sure."

On September 7, 1608, the lean, bronzed wanderers reached Jamestown. Sam Collier came down to the water's edge and waded out waist-deep to greet them. Master Scrivener reported, soberly, that many were still ill with the fever and that some had died of it.

"Most of our corn is harvested," he added. "We have accomplished that much while you were gone."

A Council meeting was held within three days of their return, and Smith was again named President. This time he took over the office and began to prepare the colony for the coming winter. The roof of the storehouse had sprung a leak and already rain had spoiled a large part of their precious provisions. The church still lacked a roof, and the fort and palisade both needed strengthening.

Also there was the eternal problem of defence. Smith knew that the Powhatan, though outwardly still friendly, was relentlessly on watch for the first sign of weakness. Then he would strike, as he had long ago at Roanoke and Croatan.

With Percy as his able second-in-command, Smith divided the men into squadrons. The Indians came from far and near to watch in wonder while the white men marched with their heavy muskets in the field west of the fort. Smith set up targets and slowly the marksmanship improved.

Meanwhile, the pinnace and barges were put in order, and early in October Percy started off to gather

in the corn promised to Smith by the Indians along the Chesapeake. He had not reached the first headland, however, when he returned to report that Captain Newport's ship was coming up the river under full sail.



Chapter twelve

As he watched the approach of the vessel, Smith's feeling was more apprehension than joy.

"Let's hope he's brought fewer helpless gallants and more skilled workmen this time," he said, shading his eyes from the sun.

"Look!" the keen-sighted Richard Keale shouted. "There are women—I see two women aboard!"

The men stared in awed amazement. Yes, two women in billowing skirts and hooded cloaks were plainly visible.

He rowed out to meet the vessel and climbed aboard. Master Thomas Forrest, one of the passengers, had brought his wife with him to the new, strange land, and with her had come her maid, Ann Burras, sister to Forrest's valet, John. What will the fever do to those rosy English cheeks? Smith thought, but he suppressed his dismay to greet the women cordially.

"Master Forrest, you have a brave and devoted lady," he said. "We're a rough-looking crew, ma'am, but we welcome you heartily. And you,

too, young mistress," he added, while Ann Burras curtsied and blushed.

Besides the two women, Newport had brought back the Powhatan's servant, Namontack. The Indian had stalked with imperturbable dignity through the London streets, Newport told Smith. Whatever he thought, he had kept his own counsel.

"I will tell these things to the Powhatan," was all the comment Namontack would make.

When Smith asked him about the tally-stick he had carried, he shook his head.

"I threw it away before the sun set on my first day ashore," he said. "The English are as many as the leaves in the Powhatan's forests."

Smith recognized two of the passengers, Peter Winn and Richard Waldo, as veterans of the Low Countries. Another, Master Francis West, was brother to the great Lord Delaware, one of the foremost stockholders in the London Company. Of the rest, twenty-five were listed as "Gentlemen," fourteen as artisans and fifteen as labourers, although most of these last were soft-handed valets and men-servants.

Finally, there was a group of Poles and Germans, experts in the art of glassmaking. The London Company, it seemed, had decided that the making of glass would be a profitable industry for the colony. There was wood aplenty for firing furnaces and the description of the white sand dunes of Cape Henry had started the notion in someone's mind.

As for the gold—"It was sand, nothing more," Newport said shortly, and Smith refrained from comment. Instead he put the question now uppermost in his thoughts.

"I hope you've brought a supply of food to carry all these newcomers through the winter?"

Newport shook his head.

"The Company was so niggardly that in order to hire a crew of sailors, I had to promise them the right to trade here. What stores we brought are theirs—your planters can bargain with them for what they need."

Smith did not answer, but under his level look Newport shifted uncomfortably. Smith had heard before that Captain Newport, for all his skill and courage, was as grasping of a shilling as any man in England. The Company paid him a hundred pounds on each of his voyages for the news he brought them. He was paid for his ship, his cargo, his passengers and his crew—adding up to a cool thousand pounds of profit. And still he must save the hire of his sailors at the expense of the Virginia planters!

"Here's a letter from the London Council," Newport was saying. "Come into my cabin out of this wind."

A sharp breeze was ruffling the surface of the river but the cabin was comfortably warm. Smith leaned back in his chair and opened the many-paged letter while Newport filled and lighted his tobacco pipe. Most of the crew and passengers were now on shore, and their voices, coming dimly over the water, mingled with the sound of the waves lapping against the ship's sides and the creaking of her timbers as she swayed gently at her anchor ropes.

At the first sentence he read, Smith sat up abruptly, his brows drawn together. As he read his frown deepened. It was a long, peevish, scolding letter. The President and all the planters were re-proved for their continual quarrels, for their idleness and for their failure to send anything of value back to England (which must be because they were keep-

ing the best of everything for themselves), and also for treating the Indians with inexcusable cruelty.

Therefore the Council sent specific orders. Captain Newport was to be given men and supplies for a voyage up the James, beyond the Falls. A boat had been put aboard the vessel in four sections. These sections must be carried to the nearest point above the Falls where the river was navigable, and there assembled to be used for the exploration. Expert geographers in London had proved from their calculations that the North-west Passage lay there. It must be discovered at once.

The report of that discovery, samples of some real metallic gold (not the trash that had been sent before), and definite news of the fate of Raleigh's lost colony must be sent to England without further delay. The London Council was losing patience; it would accept no more excuses.

To improve relations with the Indians, King James himself had graciously chosen gifts for the Emperor Powhatan: a crown of copper, a coronation robe and bedroom furniture, including a handsomely carved bedstead, a ewer and a basin. The red-skinned Emperor was to be crowned with as much respect and reverence as any European monarch.

The glassmakers, imported at great expense, were to set to work at once, and glassware must be loaded aboard each vessel that sailed for England so that the investors could at last begin to get some return for all their money. If these orders were not carried out to the letter, the Virginia planters could expect no more aid from England.

Smith read to the end.

"Do you know what's written here?" he demanded.

Newport nodded.

"Wingfield, Archer and Martin have had their say with the Council, as you must have known they would," he said.

Smith flung the letter down on the table.

"Well, the answer to that is easy. Tell them, when you return, that we have no time or strength for such fantastic projects. Carry four sections of a boat over the Falls? Burn it to ashes and *one* man might carry it past the Falls in a bag! But to put it together and float it in that stream? You were there yourself! You know how impossible that would be. And as for crowning the Powhatan, I'll not consent to any such nonsense."

"You mean you'll disobey orders?"

"Yes, bluntly, and I'll tell you why. Our only hope of living through the winter, especially with this new company to feed, is to buy corn from the Indians now, this month, while it's newly gathered and they have plenty. I've already arranged for it and it'll take every man and every boat."

"You think I'll carry that answer back to England?" Newport's face was hard. "I'm no such fool. I'll appeal to your Council members."

At its meeting, called the next day, the Council wavered. Waldo and Winn had been appointed by London to membership, and they sided with Newport, as, of course, did Ratcliffe. Scrivener was inclined to agree with Smith, but when Newport promised to freight the pinnace with twenty tons of corn from Werewocomoco and get another load from the tribes of the upper James, Scrivener yielded. The Council then voted that a hundred and twenty armed men, the pinnace and its crew, and supplies for them all be put at Newport's disposal.

Ratcliffe grinned into Smith's lowering face.

"Our President still disagrees. We've heard his arguments, but behind them all is the fact that he fears to go to Werewocomoco to face the Indians whom he has treated so harshly."

Smith sprang to his feet and struck the table with his fist.

"No, Master Ratcliffe, I'm not afraid to face the Indians at Werewocomoco—or anywhere! In fact"—his frown cleared a little—"I think I'll do just that. It will save us some precious time if I can persuade the Powhatan to come here to Jamestown to receive his crown. And I shan't need a hundred and twenty musketeers to guard me. With Namontack and my page, Sam Collier, and any three gentlemen who choose to volunteer, I'll start tomorrow morning."

Shafts of October sunlight lay long and golden through the blue-shadowed woods when Smith, Sam Collier, Namontack, Waldo, Andrew Buckler and Edward Brinton set out in the early morning. Here and there frost had struck tree or bush with its random fire. The sun was warm on the men's shoulders but the shadows under the scattered pine trees were deep and cool. They moved along in Indian single file. As he followed Namontack with the swift, easy, tireless walk he had learned from red men, Smith wondered what the fellow would tell the Powhatan of his voyage. He tried to imagine London through Namontack's eyes and mind.

They traversed the twelve miles overland to the Pamunkey River, then borrowed a canoe from an Indian village and crossed to Werewocomoco. Pocahontas greeted Smith joyfully.

"I heard that you fought and conquered the

Massawomacks. You are surely the mightiest warrior of all the world," she said.

Her father was away, she told him. But she sent Namontack and another messenger after him to tell him that Smith was here.

"You and your men are tired. Stay with us until he returns. My women will make a feast and we will dance for you."

A fire was built in an open meadow between the woods and the river, and the flames rose high through the clear dusk. Outside their ring of light, shadows were deepening and Smith now noticed that the whole village—men, women and children—had gathered near. But Pocahontas was not among them.

Then, from the woods came shrill high-pitched screams and the sound of running feet. The Englishmen grasped their weapons. Could this be a trick of the Powhatan to surprise them? But now figures burst into the circle of firelight and the men could see that all were young women and girls dressed in little but garlands of leaves, their bodies glistening with oil and red puccoon paint.

Round and round the fire they sped in a wild dance, while in the darkness a drum beat. Laughing, shrieking, they crouched low, then leaped high, tossing their arms while their eyes and teeth flashed with the leaping flames. Each dancer carried a club, hatchet or spear in one hand, a gourd rattle in the other. That small, slim figure in the lead, whirling and spinning like a leaf in the wind, could be no one but Pocahontas. From each wrist dangled a lustrous otter's skin, another hung from her belt, and she brandished a warrior's bow. A quiverful of arrows was on her back and from her forehead sprang the wide-spreading antlers of a deer.

"A young red-skinned Diana with her nymphs," Waldo said in Smith's ear. "Do you know the meaning of this masque, Captain Smith?"

Smith only shook his head. Etched so fleetingly on the night in burnished bronze and velvet shadow, the dance had all the strange fierce mystery of the dark forest about them. But to explain it was beyond him.

The dance ended suddenly and the dancers vanished. A moment later they returned to invite the five white men to the house where the feast was spread. No sooner were the guests inside than the girls began to laugh and dance again. The bewildered men were pulled this way and that by first one hilarious group, then another.

"You must tell which of us you love best," Pocahontas cried to Smith above the din. "Say you love *me* best of all!"

"No, me! Me!" the other girls screamed.

But when the older women came in with platters of food the noise and confusion quieted at once. Never had the white men been served with more bounty at any Indian feast. When they had eaten their fill, they were escorted, lighted by burning pine knots, to the house where they were to sleep. Sleep and watch by turns, for Smith never relaxed his vigilance.

The Powhatan arrived the next day. When Smith invited him to receive his gifts from the English King in Jamestown, he shook his head.

"In this country I am the king and this is my land. Gifts come to me, not I to them."

As Smith and his companions were getting into their dugout canoe for the homeward journey, Pocahontas came running down the river bank.

"You did not stay long," she said, pouting "Will you come again soon to see me, Captain-John-Smith?"

"Yes," he promised. "Soon I'll come back up your river in a great boat with sails to bring fine presents from our king to your father."

She was all smiles again.

"Will you bring something for me, too?"

"What would you like me to bring you, Pocahontas?" he asked. He was kneeling in the canoe, holding it steady in the shallow water with his paddle. Pocahontas's face was almost level with his. The sun shone down through a mass of golden leaves above their heads and was reflected upward from the water, bathing them both in a pattern of rippling, greenish-golden light.

What a lovely little thing she is, he thought, bright-eyed, soft and quick as a flying squirrel. Truly there's no one like her. He saw her lips part and her breath draw in quickly as though she were going to speak. Her eyes wavered and fell. Suddenly she turned away, raced up the bank and was gone.

Astonished, he stared after her.

"Now why should she do that?" he wondered aloud. "Did I say anything to offend her?"

Waldo was smilingly oddly as he sat in the bottom of the dugout facing Smith.

"I don't understand the language of the Indians, but neither am I blind. If ever I saw adoration in a girl's look——"

"Adoration?" Smith laughed and shook his head. "Hardly that. Affection—yes, I'm sure she feels affection for me, and I for her. I couldn't care more for a child of my own, if I had one. Why shouldn't

I, when she saved me from death in her father's house? And all of Jamestown, too, when she brought us food in our hungry winter?"

He shoved the canoe from the shore and steered it out into the stream.

"This dugout is a clumsy vessel. I wish I could have got one of the canoes from the Massawomacks. Those are sweet little craft to handle, I'll be bound. They make them of bark and they float light as leaves."

"Perhaps Pocahontas is not such a child as you think," Waldo persisted. "Savages ripen early, and even in Europe royal princesses are often married younger than she. If you were to wed the Powhatan's daughter, all Virginia could be yours by right of inheritance. If I had such a chance——"

Smith's paddle halted in midstroke. Sam Collier and the other men were silent and staring.

"Wed Pocahontas? That pretty child and a battered old soldier like me? Now there's a fantastic notion! I'd as soon think of marrying that red-winged blackbird in the reeds there, or one of those fire-jewelled dragonflies hovering over the water. And as for inheriting from the Powhatan——" He shook his head. "The Indian customs of succession are not like ours. The Powhatan's two brothers succeed him, the one after the other. Then his sister, then his sister's sons. Never his own sons and daughters."

"Even so——" Waldo began, but Smith interrupted.

"No, Master Waldo, I'm afraid you can make no match for me with little Pocahontas, nor with anyone else. My heart is already given."

He paused a moment, looking about him. Silently,

with only the faintest ripple, the canoe moved on the darkly flowing stream. The smoke of cooking-fires drifted through the trees behind them and the voice of an Indian woman calling her child came clearly through the morning air. Frost had struck again during the night ; the river bank burned with a conflagration of colours all mirrored brilliantly in the water. Smith drew a long breath—it felt cool and sharp in his throat and tasted of wood smoke.

“ My heart, my hand, my mind are already given to this venture of Virginia,” he continued. “ When I was a young lad, I thought honour could be found only in war and I set out to win my share of it. But now I’ve come to another belief. I think there’s more enduring honour in building than in war’s destruction. I’ve set my heart on building up this *new* England here in the wilderness, where honest men can breathe this bright, free air and prosper by the work of their own hands. As I see it, it’s a long task and one that will demand all a man has to give. I think that this venture will have to take the place for me of wife, children, hawks, hounds, even cards and dice.” Then he smiled suddenly into the sober faces turned to him. “ But never pity me, for I swear to you all, it has become my best content.”

Chapter *thirteen*



THE pinnacle and barge were sent around by water from Jamestown to carry the heavy bedroom furniture to the Powhatan at Werewocomoco. Captain Newport, Smith and fifty musketeers marched overland with pipers, drummers and trumpeters before them making gay music along the forest paths, for this was a visit of state made at King James's royal command.

The lithe, sinewy Indians in their supple fur garments stared in amazement at the white men burdened down with helmets, body armour and heavy leather jackets and boots.

"How can they fight, encased like turtles?" one savage asked in amazement.

But the white men's muskets, the terrible thundersticks, filled them with terror and awe. Since the white men's god had provided them with such weapons, was he as much stronger than their gods as muskets were than bows and arrows? Master Hunt's pious teachings went unheeded, but more than one village chief, as they passed, asked Captain Smith to put in a good word with *his* god for the

village's next hunting trip. Their own deities seemed to be of little use lately, for the deer were wary and hard to catch.

At Werewocomoco the old Powhatan listened with grave dignity to Captain Newport's speeches, translated for him by his man Namontack. The heavy carved bedstead which had been brought around by water was unloaded and set up in front of his door. The Powhatan accepted it graciously, but it was plain that he could see little worth in the strange contraption. Nor, to tell the truth, could Smith, in such a setting. The shining silver-gilt basin and pitcher, however, plainly delighted the chief and his women.

As for the scarlet robe and crown, he was content to have them laid out before him, but putting them on him was another matter. When Newport held the crown aloft and stepped forward to place it on his head, the Powhatan sprang up from his couch and shied away like a nervous horse.

"He fears there's witchcraft in it," Smith said. "Powhatan, a crown is a mark of such greatness that our own kings always receive their crowns kneeling."

Namontack did his best to explain, also, but it was no use. The Powhatan would not kneel or even sit down again, and he was too tall for Newport to crown him as he stood erect. The ceremony seemed hopelessly deadlocked. At last Smith lost his patience. He put an affectionate arm about the old chief's shoulders, then leaned his whole weight suddenly upon him, forcing him down for the instant it took Newport to place the crown on his head. Since there seemed to be nothing painful about the metal crown and the white soldiers set up such a



cheer in his honour, the chief took it with fair grace, though he was not pleased.

Newport now asked for corn to fill the pinnace. The Powhatan had expected better gifts—cannon or at least muskets from the English King—and he declared sulkily that he could spare no more than six or seven bushels. Nor would he send guides with Newport to the land above the Falls.

“Make war on the Monacans if you wish,” he said. “I will send no warriors of mine out at this time of year. In the winter it is better to sleep warm by the fire than to go out fighting battles.”

Smith had not seen Pocahontas among the women at the coronation and when he asked for her, the Powhatan frowned.

“She has gone to visit my sister,” was all that he would say.

Back to Jamestown they journeyed, then, with nothing to show for their time and labours but a few bushels of corn instead of a shipload and the doubtful

satisfaction of having placed a copper crown on the Powhatan's resentful head.

Nevertheless, Captain Newport was still determined to fulfil the rest of the London Council's orders and explore the upper James. Since Smith could not persuade him that neither gold, news of Raleigh's Roanoke settlers nor a North-west Passage was to be found there, he provided Newport with men and supplies and sent him on his way.

Smith himself remained in Jamestown. The Polish and German glassmakers must be set to work. They were a surly, clannish group, persuaded to come by false promises and now bitterly resentful at what they found in the vaunted New World. Smith was the only one who could understand their languages and he listened to their complaints with some sympathy.

"I'm sorry for you. I had nothing to do with bringing you here, but now that you've come, why not make the best of it? I can promise that you'll get the same treatment I give to any man—no better, no worse."

As for the newly arrived colonists, Smith chose thirty of those who had not gone with Newport on his voyage and took them five miles down the river where he had marked a good stand of timber. There they made camp and set to work cutting the trees and splitting them up for clapboard. Among the newcomers were Gabriel Beadle and John Russel—gay and dashing gallants both, whose smooth, ringed hands had never before held such a tool as an axe. They stayed cheerful and good-humoured, nevertheless, treating the work like some new out-of-door sport.

"If the President of our colony can do such

labour, the rest of us can, too," John Russel said.

"The President has been at it long enough to get his hands hardened," Gabriel Beadle said, with a rueful look at his smarting palms.

The work continued while the blisters grew. Soon almost every blow was echoed by an oath of pain.

"There's brimstone enough in the air above us to set the woods afire!" Smith said. "Sam Collier, keep tally on each man's oaths, and tonight every oath will mean a can of water poured down a man's sleeve."

Sam Collier kept so faithful an account that not even Smith himself escaped a wetting that night. By the end of a few days, however, there was remarkably little profanity to be heard, owing either to the cold-water treatment or to a toughening of skins.

"You've put a new spirit into them, Captain," Anas Todkill said as he watched the axes swinging one morning. "These thirty cheerful gentlemen are doing more than a hundred sullen labourers forced against their will."

Smith nodded.

"They're better than I had dared to hope. And yet," he added dryly, "you know as well as I that a dozen skilled workmen would be better than them all!"

A few days later Captain Newport returned and Smith hurried back to Jamestown. The explorers, he learned, had travelled only two days' journey above the Falls. They had found the Indians unfriendly, the river unnavigable, no North-west Passage or any hint of the existence of the other sea,



no news of Sir Walter Raleigh's men and no mine of gold. In the brief time they had been gone, half of them had fallen sick from something they ate along the way and could barely drag themselves ashore.

As for corn from the Indians, Newport seemed to have forgotten that.

"Why, we were lucky to have escaped with our lives!" he told Smith.

Smith bit back the scornful words he might have said, but could not hide the bitterness in his face.

"Get the two exploring barges ready," he told Todkill. "I'll see what I can find up the Chickahominy."

The Chickahominy Indians at first refused to part with their corn; the Powhatan had given orders against trading with the white men.

"Do you think that the Powhatan's anger can be more terrible than mine?" Smith asked them.

A volley of musket fire above their heads settled the question, and they filled the barges with fish, wild fowl and corn.

As soon as he returned with this cargo to Jamestown, he sent Master Scrivener out with the pinnace and barges. Using Smith's tactics, he secured four hogsheads of corn. By this time Newport was ready to sail back to England. His ship was loaded with clapboard and wainscot, together with samples of pitch, tar, soap ashes and a little newly-made glass. On board also was Ratcliffe, the former President, prudently taking his leave of a country where his throat was in constant danger of being cut by the victims of his disastrous blunders.

With the vessel went Captain Smith's maps of the Chesapeake, and also an answer to the London Council's letter.

"I entreat your pardon if I offend you with my rude answer," he began, then continued bluntly. He resented their scolding and he told them so. They wrote that the colonists seemed always to be quarrelling and that they complained of his harshness. His only reply was that he had used harshness when no other means could prevent desertion. As for letters feeding the gentlemen in England with false hopes, he had no knowledge of what others had said, but he himself had written nothing of the sort. He had told them only what he had seen and experienced himself, and that, he might add, by the continual hazard of his life.

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The instructions sent by Captain Newport had seemed unwise to him and he was directly against them. But the Virginia Council had overruled his decision and he had, therefore, carried them out to the letter against his own better judgment. The coronation of the Powhatan had been a disastrous waste of time at the season when they should have been buying the Indians' store of corn. Besides which, the Powhatan had not been pleased.

So also with the exploration above the Falls. Captain Newport had accomplished nothing by it, had wasted much time and returned with half his men sick. More important, he had stayed here in Virginia so long with his ship and crew that he had had to take three much-needed hogsheads of the settlers' corn for his return voyage to England.

With the next ship, Smith asked, please to send an accurate account of what stores the colonists were supposed to receive, not leave it to the pleasure of the captain. He had been told that many of the ship's officers maintained their families in England out of supplies meant for the colonists, and for which they were charged on the books.

Furthermore, he entreated, "Send but thirty carpenters, husbandmen, gardeners, fishermen, blacksmiths, masons, diggers-up of trees, grubbers-out of roots, with their tools and provisions, rather than a thousand such as have been sent before who have to be fed and lodged for months before they can be trained to be of any use."

It was an honest and forthright letter. It gave plain facts and reasons why the colony had not made a better showing in these two years.

"As yet you must not look for any profitable

returns," he warned them in conclusion. "So, I humbly rest."

Newport took the sealed missive and stood turning it over in his hands. He cleared his throat hesitantly.

"I hope that this letter to the Council is less outspoken than you have been with me."

"I have told them the truth," Smith answered.

"You're no politician or ever will be until you learn better than that," Newport said. "So long as you need their goodwill, tell them only what they wish to hear. Come—change the letter. There's time. Write it over again. I tell you, there are men in England who hate you and who already have had their say before the London Council. Don't play into their hands by offending these powerful lords and gentlemen who are always used to respect and humility from commoners."

Smith smiled but shook his head.

"I think better of my English countrymen than that," he said. "Thanks for your goodwill and your warning anyway, for I know it was well meant. I ask a favour of you, however. If you can find the whereabouts of my friend, Henry Hudson, will you give him a copy of my map? It might help him in his own explorations."

Newport promised, and the two clasped hands.

The vessel weighed anchor, moved out into the middle of the river and turned its bow slowly downstream. Smith watched it go until the sturdy figure of Newport on the high stern deck was no longer visible.

The wind had begun to blow as he stood there and something struck sharply against his cheek. Snow! He looked up at the sky. Yes, that was snow

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swirling against the heavy slate-grey clouds. Winter was upon them. Winter, whose other name to him was hunger.

The three hogsheds of corn sent with Newport had made deep inroads into the already scanty stores of the colony, and Smith set out once again in search of more. This time they sailed down the river to Nansamond. The chief had promised four hundred bushels of corn when Smith should return. But now the Indians refused stubbornly to trade.

"The Powhatan's work again," Smith said. "Well, we know the treatment."

Once more, by means of a little musket fire which hurt no one, the Indians were persuaded to change their minds. And once again Smith meticulously paid the price he had first offered, leaving them well content with the bargain.

He thought it best not to remain in the Indian village that night, but retired four miles down the river and made camp in an open field where they could not be surprised. The ground was covered with snow, but the veterans, as Smith had taught them, dug away the snow and built a great fire in its place. When the ground was well dried they raked aside the fire, covered the place with a woven mat and lay down in warm comfort with another mat to shelter them from the wind. During the night, at the change of the watch, they shifted the fire again and lay on the ground it had heated, cosy as ever.

"Many a cold winter night we've camped thus," Anas Todkill explained. "And those of us who most commonly went on these expeditions have stayed healthy and fat when the rest of the planters have been ailing."

At Jamestown they found news. Red-cheeked

Ann Burras had finally chosen between her score of suitors and had promised to wed John Laydon, a strapping young fellow who had come out with the first shipment.

"A wedding, and at the Christmas season, too!" Smith said. "We must make a holiday of it."

Mistress Forrest supplied a wedding dress, Master Forrest a dowry of a silver pound, and gifts poured in from all the men and from many friendly Indians. John Burras gave his sister away, Master Hunt performed the ceremony and Smith, as President, was the first witness. Afterwards the pipers played their gayest airs for dancing. To be sure there were only two ladies as partners for two hundred men, but, in the round dances, liveliness and staying-power were more important than grace. The men danced cheerfully with each other, warmed by an extra ration of sack.

After this interlude, Smith continued his gathering-in of corn. The Indians at Weanock said that their harvest had been poor and that they had only enough for themselves. Smith knew that they were telling the truth when he saw the thinness of the children, usually so roly-poly and fat at this time of year. He therefore took only a little from them and paid them a higher price in copper.

Then Scrivener and Percy, who had gone again to Werewocomoco on the rumour of storehouses there full to bursting, returned empty-handed. A few days later, Namontack and the white boy, Thomas Salvage, brought a message to Smith from the Powhatan. If Smith would send men to build him a house like the Englishmen's, and bring him a grindstone, fifty swords, a cock and a hen, as well as copper and beads, he would load his largest ship with corn.

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"He has plenty there gathered from all up and down the river," Salvage told Smith. "He treats me well, like his own son. I almost feel affection for the old fellow. He admires you, Captain, but he fears you. He thinks that you and only you are dangerous to his rule of the cuntry. Perhaps you had better not go there, for I think he would kill you if he could."

Smith nodded.

"He's up to some devilry with this message. But we need the corn. It's worth some risk. Besides——" A plan was shaping in his mind.

The capture of the great Emperor Montezuma brought Cortez victory over the Aztecs. If they could capture the Powhatan and hold him as a hostage it would end their troubles with the Indians, Smith told himself. The old chief, was a kind of god to his people, just as Montezuma was to his.

Smith therefore sent carpenters and workmen overland to begin building the Powhatan's house. The pinnace and the barge he then manned with forty-five seasoned veterans, and they set sail. Loaded on board were the grindstone, the cock and hen and a good supply of copper and beads. But not the fifty swords.

"If I get my throat cut, it won't be by a sword I gave to the Powhatan myself," Smith said.

Chapter fourteen



THEY lodged the first night with the Indians of Warraskoyack on the south bank of the James. They were sitting by the fire when the Warraskoyack chief moved close to Smith and spoke in a low voice.

"Captain, do not trust the Powhatan. He has sent for you only to kill you," he said.

Smith thanked him for his warning. Then, to show how little he feared the Powhatan and his plots, he deliberately changed the subject.

"Tell me, do you know what happened to the other white men who came across the sea many years ago and built a village on the island called Roanoke?"

It was a question he still asked automatically, but he no longer hoped for news.

The savage shook his head.

"I know only that they were there and then that they were gone," he said, pausing before he spoke again. "But I heard once that there were some white captives at a village many days' journey from here, called Chawmonock."

Smith's heart gave a sudden leap. Had he come

on a clue to the mystery of Raleigh's men at last, after so many baffling failures? he wondered. He wavered, torn between the desire to track it down himself without delay and his wish to capture the Powhatan. His hesitation was brief.

“ I'll send one of my men to Chawmonock to learn more. Will you give him guides? ”

The chief agreed, and Smith picked Michael Sicklemore, a brave and resourceful soldier, for the quest. As hostage for the guides and also to learn the language, he left Sam Collier with the friendly chief.

At the entrance to Chesapeake Bay the cold increased and a blizzard of snow swirled about the boats. It was impossible to continue. They lodged at Kecoughtan, where the once hostile Indians welcomed them with a feast of oysters, fish, venison and turkeys. Smith glanced about at his comrades, seated comfortably with the Indian warriors around the blazing fire. Anas Todkill was humming an old Christmas song in his reedy tenor. The others took up the chorus and soon the hut shook with the volume of sound. The Indians smiled and nodded to each other, well pleased with the white men's strange music.

Surely, men were never more merry, fed more plentifully or warmed by better fires in England than here in the dry, smoky houses of Kecoughtan. What a paradise on earth this Virginia could be, Smith thought, when red men and white sat down peacefully together.

But they must go on to Werewocomoco and match wits (and perhaps weapons) with the Powhatan. They arrived on the twelfth of January, 1609, to find the Pamunkey River frozen for half a mile from shore. It was necessary to break the ice before the

barge could reach land, and this took so long that the ebb of the tide left the boat stranded on the mud. The men had to wade ashore waist-deep in icy ooze.

They were met on the bank by the Powhatan's servants who led them to a vacant house at the river's edge. Food and fires were ready. But was there a subtle change in the Indians' manner, something mocking and scornful in their smiles? Smith set his sentries with care and slept only fitfully that night.

The next day the Powhatan invited them to his great house and spread his usual lavish meal.

"Now, Captain Smith, tell me why you have come to see me and how long you will stay," he asked, with the blandest of smiles.

"You know why I have come, Powhatan," Smith answered. "I sent you the workmen you asked for. I have brought gifts for you, and our boats are here to carry away the corn you promised."

"I never sent for you and I have no corn to spare. I might trade forty bushels for forty swords, but no more."

Smith bit back the hasty answer on his lips. Like a seasoned duellist, the chief was beginning the encounter by trying to put his opponent out of temper.

"You must be growing old, Powhatan," Smith said mildly. "Only old men are so forgetful."

The Indian laughed aloud.

"Very well, Captain Smith. Show me what you have brought to trade."

Nothing pleased his taste, however.

"Why should I give you corn for copper? I can eat corn, but not copper. Where are my swords?"

"Powhatan, I set out from Jamestown in the cold and snow at your request. I sent my workmen to build you a fine house because you asked for it and I wished to please you. I have come here to get the corn you promised me. As I told you long ago, I do not trade my swords." He paused, meeting the old, unfathomable eyes. "My weapons give me the power to *take* what I want from you, but steal I will not. I wish only to trade honestly, as before."

There was a scarcely perceptible change in the chief's manner.

"I did not say I would not give you the corn, Captain Smith," he said. "But it will take time, perhaps two days, to bring it here from my store-houses. And my people are afraid of you, afraid to carry the baskets here when you always carry such terrible weapons. Leave your guns on your boat when you come ashore next. We took you into our tribe. Show that you are a Powhatan and my good son."

It was Smith's turn now to smile blandly and shake his head.

"It is our custom to wear our guns and pistols," he said. And there the matter rested for that day.

The next morning, while waiting for the corn to be brought, Smith went to see how the work on the Powhatan's house was progressing. He took one of the German workmen, Franz by name, aside. In his own language, so that the Indians standing near could not understand, he asked the man to keep his eyes open and watch carefully for any gathering of warriors, and to aid in the plan to take the Powhatan as a hostage.

Franz looked startled, then grinned broadly and agreed. When he rejoined his mates, Smith could

hear loud guffaws of laughter. Why should that amuse them so much? he wondered.

But now it was time to talk with the Powhatan again and he would need his wits about him. Smith had explained his problem to his men.

"We must get our corn first, if possible. Once it's aboard the boats, our next move is to capture the Powhatan. You have your orders on that. If we act too soon, the Indians will vanish into the woods like smoke, taking the corn with them. If we linger after we have it, they'll grow suspicious also. Be ready to act swiftly when I give the word."

He loaded and primed his pistol, then, with a small squad of soldiers, walked to the chief's house. He left his men outside to keep watch and entered. The place seemed almost empty. Some women chatted at one end. The Powhatan was huddled by the fire wrapped in his great mantle of racoon skins.

"Captain Smith," he began, and his voice echoed hollow in the quiet house. "Captain Smith, I have seen three generations of my people come and go. Of my own generation there is not a warrior living. I alone am left. I am an old man and soon I must die, but I would like to make sure that those who come after me have as good a life as mine has been. How can I help but fear for them when I hear whispers everywhere that you white men have come to take our country and to destroy us?"

Smith was about to answer, but the Powhatan lifted his hand.

"What can you gain by fighting with us, who provide you corn? If you attack us, you will die as surely as we. More surely, for we can flee to the woods and live there somehow, but you can only starve.

"Do you think I am so simple as not to know that it is better to lie warm, sleep quietly with my women and children, laugh and be merry with you for my friend, have copper and hatchets, than to be forced to hide in the cold woods. There I should have to eat acorns, roots and such trash. My bed would be the hard ground. My men would keep watch, but every time a twig broke we would start up crying 'Here comes Captain Smith!' I should not live long under such hardships. But neither would you, without us to grow corn for you."

The Powhatan's voice was hoarse and feeble, but his hooded eyes were keen as he waited for the Englishman's reply. What a play-actor the old fellow would make! Smith found himself thinking with genuine admiration.

"Why do you talk of attack and destruction?" he replied. "I have never harmed you, Powhatan. And I have kept my word to you. But *you* broke your promise to me when you forbade your people to trade with me."

Now the Powhatan was on his feet, striding up and down restlessly. His voice was deep and sonorous as ever when he spoke again.

"Captain Newport gave me swords, copper, clothes, a bed, everything I asked for and at my own price. No one, no one but you, Captain Smith, has ever refused to do what I asked or to lay whatever I wanted at my feet."

Then the entrance of Russel told Smith, by pre-arranged signal, that a passage had been broken through the ice and that their vessels had reached the shore. Perhaps it would be better to make sure of the Powhatan first and take their chances on the corn. If they could rush him to the boats before his

warriors guessed what was happening, they could fight off any attempts at rescue.

"I've changed my plans," he said to Russel. "I think our quarry's caught the scent of danger. It's now or never. Send the whole force here."

Russel hurried out and Smith turned to the Powhatan, who had halted his pacing and was watching suspiciously.

"Powhatan, as I have but one God, so I obey but one king. I live here in this land not as your subject but as your neighbour. Come to my village as my guest. If you would visit me there as I do you here, you would know more of us and you'd no longer doubt our promises. Where is your daughter Pocahontas? Ask her and she will tell you that she came and went as freely as a bird among us and no one dreamed of harming her."

"Pocahontas has gone to Orapaks," the Powhatan said, but his glance darted towards a group of young women whispering near the fire.

Smith felt sure that he was lying. He turned to them, smiling and greeting by name two whom he recognized. At first they would not reply. They clung together, hanging their heads and trying to stifle nervous giggles, their frightened eyes on the Powhatan all the while. Then, at some sign from him, they began to answer Smith saucily. They were both pretty as partridges, though without Pocahontas's enchanting grace.

Suddenly, John Russel spoke at Smith's elbow.

"Captain, where is the Powhatan?" he asked.

Smith looked about him. The Powhatan and all his other women had vanished. In the great smoky house were now only Smith and Russel, and two frightened, round-eyed girls. But—yes, those

shadows in the far end of the house were taking shape, were moving. A group of armed warriors came warily and silently forward, cutting them off from the doorway.

Smith's action was swift and instinctive. He raised his primed and loaded pistol and fired a shot into the ground at the feet of the nearest man. He leaped back with a howl, knocking over the man behind him. While the savages were dazed momentarily by the flash and explosion, Smith drew his sword and strode towards the door.

"Follow me," he said to Russel.

The bewildered Indians gave way before the flashing steel. The Englishmen reached the open air and found that other warriors, who had been surrounding the house, were already in flight. They had been routed by the sight of Percy leading his musketeers up from the shore at a hard run.

"The treacherous devils! Shall I burn the town?" Percy demanded. But Smith shook his head.

"Wait. We've lost the Powhatan. He and his pretty women outwitted me neatly. But we may still get the corn."

For a time it seemed that the Indians had indeed vanished like smoke. At last, an old, white-haired man, a servant of the Powhatan, appeared with his hands upraised.

"Captain Smith, my master has fled because he knew you were planning to capture him," he said.

Now how in the world did he guess that? Had the old heathen the power to read my thoughts? Smith wondered. In spite of himself he felt a superstitious shiver tingling his spine. But he spoke sternly.

"Why did those armed warriors gather, then?"

"The Powhatan summoned them to guard the corn he had brought for you. He feared your soldiers might steal it."

The man's voice died away. He was shaking with fear.

Smith stood silent. Behind the speaker he could see the warriors again moving nearer. At least four score of grimly painted fellows, all armed with clubs and bows.

When he did not reply, the old man continued.

"We have the corn ready, and women and slaves to carry it to your boats. But they are afraid to come nearer because of your terrible guns. The smoke of your matches hurts their eyes. Put down your guns. Our warriors will guard them for you and then your men will have their hands free to carry the baskets of corn."

Smith smiled, his teeth white through his golden beard.

"I have a better plan than that. My men will keep their guns, and they will keep their matches lighted, also. But if your women and slaves are afraid to come near us, let the warriors carry the corn. Yes, you warriors of the Powhatan, put down *your* weapons—unless you wish to hear our guns again!"

There was some hesitation. Carrying baskets was women's work. Never had an Indian warrior bent his shoulders to such a task. But the sight of Smith's men cocking their glowing matches hurried the decision. In a few moments, bows, arrows and clubs lay on the snowy ground under guard and a line of sullen warriors was moving down the river bank, each with a basket of corn on his muscular back.

By the time it was all aboard, the tide had ebbed and left the barge stranded, as before. The white men returned to their house at the river's brink to spend the night. In the distance they could hear the Indian drums begin to beat, then singing and laughter.

"How quickly they change their humours," Russel said. "One moment thirsting for our blood, the next, gay as children."

"There's little that's childish in *that* laughter," Smith said. "We'll double our guard tonight."

In his duel with the Powhatan each of them had won a bout. Smith had the corn, but the old chief had eluded capture. The final issue was still in doubt and the stakes were still high—the lives of Smith and the forty-odd men under him.

At last, the drums and voices died down and the stillness of the wintry forest night closed about them. The cold had silenced even the rippling voice of the river. Wrapped in his cloak, Smith lay alert and wakeful by the fire. He roused up swiftly when a sentry entered, his shoulders whitely powdered, to report that it had begun to snow.

A little later, a startled oath from another guard brought them all to their feet, weapons ready. The sentry pushed aside the mat that covered the door. Someone was with him—a small, slight figure wrapped in furs.

"Pocahontas!" Smith breathed.

"She slipped past me like a shadow, Captain," the sentry protested.

"Pocahontas, child! Your father told me you were at Orapaks," Smith said.

Her eyes were wide and luminous in the dim fire-light.

"My father lied. He did not want me to see you because I know why he sent for you to come. He fears you as he has never feared any man, and he means to kill you. Listen. In a little while his men will bring you food. Do not eat it. It will make you sleep, and then they will murder you all." There were tears on her cheeks. "I do not want you to die. Go away from here now, while you can."

"You came here all alone through the darkness to warn us, Pocahontas?" Smith said. He touched her wet cheek with his roughened fingers. "And those tears are for us?"

"For *you*—only for you, Captain-John-Smith," she said fiercely, and the strained silence was filled with the soft fluttering of the fire.

Smith shattered the spell with an effort.

"Don't cry, little Princess. Now that you've warned us, we can protect ourselves. You're a good daughter to your English father. What present can I give you to make you laugh again?"

He reached inside his shirt and began to unclasp a gold chain he wore about his neck. But Pocahontas shook her head.

"No—no! I dare take nothing of yours. My father would kill me if he knew I had been here."

For the space of a single, long-held breath her dark eyes looked into his. Then she turned away swiftly and was gone. The mat in the doorway swung into place behind her.

Smith hurried to follow, but outside the hut he could see nothing in the darkness but the white, falling snow and the dim shapes of trees moving their branches in the wind.

Within an hour a group of the Powhatan's servants brought platters of hot, steaming food.

"Our master sent this to you, Captain Smith. The night is so cold he thought you would sleep better if you ate something," one of them explained.

Smith made them taste every dish. Their reluctance told him that Pocahontas's warning had been true.

"Take it back to your master," he said. "Tell him that we don't feel sleepy, and that we are ready to receive him and his messengers at any time."

They waited, muskets and pistols primed, until daylight. Groups of other Indians came from time to time on one excuse or another, but remained outwardly friendly. By dawn the tide was high and they embarked under a red winter sunrise. Namontack brought a message from the Powhatan just before they sailed.

"My master wishes you a good voyage and hopes you will visit him again," he said. "As soon as his house is built, he will send the workmen back to you. He is your true friend."

"And I am as truly his friend, no less and no more," Smith told him, and his blue eyes met the Indian's with a bright, deliberate stare.

Chapter fifteen



THEY were no sooner out in midstream than Smith made another decision.

"We must have more corn than this. We'll go to Opechancanough's village and buy from him. He promised to save some of his harvest for us. He may have forgotten his promise, but it's worth a try. And we must be on our guard—he's a wily devil and he's the Powhatan's brother."

Stalwart and gorgeous in paint, beads and copper, Opechancanough, Smith's old captor, came down to the river's edge to greet the white men. He seemed surprisingly friendly and willing to trade. While the corn was being brought from the storehouses, he invited Smith into his house out of the cold.

After the customary feast, the trading began. It was going smoothly when John Russel, sergeant of the guard, entered hurriedly.

"There are several hundred armed Indians coming across the fields," he said. "They are surrounding this house and they have cut us off from the river."

Smith turned on Opechancanough and the savage's face betrayed his treachery. Smith's mind raced.

He could easily kill the Indian chief, for his pistol was loaded and primed. Then he and his soldiers could almost surely fight their way back to the boats. But what then? There was the corn. Always, always there was the corn!

Opechancanough wet his lips with his tongue.

"Captain Smith, my warriors have gathered here to bring you a fine present. They are waiting outside to show it to you," he said.

"A present, Opechancanough?" Smith repeated, and made a movement towards the door.

Russel, Percy and West all spoke together.

"Don't go, Captain. It may be a trap. Let one of us go first——"

"No," Smith answered. His eyes were brilliant and he was smiling as he strode towards the door. "I want to see it for myself."

But, as he passed Opechancanough, he wheeled suddenly, seized the Indian's long scalp lock with one hand and with the other hand pressed his pistol against the bare, tattooed breast. "We'll go together, my good friend."

Opechancanough's colour changed under his paint. At the doorway Smith pushed the Indian in front of him, then stepped out and looked around. Women and children were nowhere in sight in the village. Everywhere there were warriors. At least thirty lay half-concealed behind a great fallen tree with their arrows aimed towards the doorway where Smith stood.

At sight of the chief in Smith's grasp their dismay was almost comical.

"Tell them to drop their weapons," Smith ordered.

They obeyed, and Percy and his men gathered them up. Only then did Smith release his grip.

"Now we will continue our trading, Opechan-canough," he said.

When at last the barges and pinnace were filled to capacity, Smith turned towards home. They stopped at Warraskoyack to pick up Sam Collier and arrived off Jamestown in mid-February. Their expedition had lasted six weeks. The forty-six men were in hearty good health, for they had fed well. At the price of twenty-five pounds of copper, fifty pounds of iron tools and some beads they had taken in two hundred pounds of deer-suet (which they used for cooking) and four hundred and seventy-nine bushels of corn.

"Yet, for all those weeks of struggle and danger, what is it but a little poor corn?" John Russel sighed. "If it had been gold, now——"

"If you are ever as hungry as we were during our first summer, which God forbid, you'll never say such words again," George Percy told him.

At the first sight of Jamestown, Smith had fallen silent. What would they find there? He had never doubted that it was his duty to get the Powhatan's corn if he could, and yet—— Should he, the President, have left the town for so long? Scrivener was honest and able, but he lacked experience. Foreboding was strong in him as he stared at the advancing shoreline.

They found Jamestown stunned by a series of tragedies and misfortunes. All work had stopped; confusion and despair hung like a poisonous fog over the settlement. Eleven of their ablest men, including Scrivener himself, had been drowned when their boat capsized in a gale. The corn in the storehouse had been found to be so spoiled by rain and eaten by worms and rats that even the hogs would not touch

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it. Only a little less disastrous, tools and weapons were continually vanishing, no one could explain how.

"Not an Indian has passed the barrier by night or day. I'll swear that on my life," the sergeant of the guard said, his honest voice shaking.

The boatloads of corn banished the threat of famine, but it would have to be carefully rationed to last until the next harvest. The problem of morale was more difficult. Smith set his resourceful mind to the problem. He divided the whole colony into working teams of from ten to fifteen men.

"Six hours of every day we'll spend in productive work, the rest in drills and games," he decreed. "If each man does his share, no one will be too heavily burdened."

And when a few gentlemen shirked their tasks but appeared promptly for their ration of food, Smith prescribed a simple remedy.

"He who does not work shall not eat."

It was sharp medicine, but it brought a quick cure.

He then studied the baffling thefts of tools and weapons. It was easy to fix the guilt on the Indians of Paspahegh, their nearest neighbours, who were incorrigible thieves.

"But they must have help inside the town," he decided.

Then Richard Salvage arrived with news.

"The carpenters have stopped building the Powhatan's house, and the Germans among them have gone with him to Orapaks," he reported. "They're teaching the Indians how to use the white men's weapons. The Indians of Paspahegh are bringing them in, but they get them from the German glass-makers at Jamestown."

"Why didn't I suspect them before?" Smith

exclaimed angrily. "Then Franz was in league with the Powhatan all the while. It explains why he laughed so heartily when I told him my plan to capture the old man, and how the Powhatan was warned and escaped. If ever I get my hands on the renegade rogue——!"

The glass factory was the rendezvous of the smugglers. Smith lay in wait there that very evening just after sundown with a squad of soldiers. Franz himself, disguised as an Indian, was the first to walk into the trap. He saw his danger barely in time and took to his heels.

"After him!" Smith shouted.

He set off at a run but missed his footing and wrenched his ankle painfully. Forced to give up the chase, he sent the soldiers on without him.

He was returning alone along the river when the chief of the Paspahegh suddenly loomed up on the path before him, enormous in the dusk. There was no time to draw sword or pistol. The savage's bow was bent, his arrow aimed. Smith leaped forward and grappled with him and the arrow whistled sharply past his shoulder. They struggled silently. Neither made an outcry, for each feared to call help for the other. Their stamping, shuffling feet, their heavy breathing were the only sounds of that grim battle. Then, suddenly, both lost their footing and went rolling down the bank into the icy river.

Somehow Smith found himself on top with a grasp on the other man's throat. They threshed and flailed about in the shallow water, but Smith kept his bulldog grip and held the Indian's head under the surface until there was no more fight in him. Then he hauled him out of the river and led him as a prisoner into the fort.

"If we keep him as a hostage, perhaps we can bargain with the Powhatan to give up the rest of those scurvy traitors for the hanging they all deserve," he told Captain Winn, who had brought Franz back in fetters.

A runner was sent with that message to the Powhatan at Orapaks. The Paspahaghans sent their man, also, begging that the Powhatan agree, so that their chief could be freed. But the Powhatan's answer was that the Germans refused to leave and that the distance was too great for his warriors to carry them by force.

"A little prodding with a spear's point and they'd walk the fifty miles and fifty more!" Smith fumed.

It did not help his temper to learn the next day that the Paspahaghan chief had escaped, fetters and all. Smith sent Captain Winn, Percy and fifteen soldiers in the shallop to capture him and bring him back. They made an attempt to go ashore but the Indians, well hidden among the trees, fought them off with such flights of arrows that they returned empty-handed to Jamestown.

Smith listened to Winn's story in chilly silence.

"The news that you were beaten back is all over Virginia by now. We can't afford that. Get the shallop ready. I'll go myself."

As they drew near the wooded shore of Paspahagh, the defiant yells and warwhoops were enough to freeze the blood. Arrows began to hit the water around the boat, but the oarsmen rowed steadily to land. The musketeers held their muskets primed and ready. Smith stood erect in the bow, the winter sunlight blazing on his burnished helmet and armour.

All at once the yells and arrows ceased. The keel

had barely grated on the pebbles when a young Indian warrior appeared with empty hands raised in sign of peace.

"Is it *you*, Captain Smith?" he asked. "We thought it was the other captain who came before. We would never dare to fight against you."

"Send your chief here to me," Smith answered sternly.

"He is here, Captain Smith. But don't be angry with him for leaving your prison. Fish swim, birds fly, beasts try to escape the snare. Why shouldn't a man do the same? To be tied and fettered is terrible. It is a kind of death."

The emotion in the young man's speech touched an echo in Smith's own heart. Who knew better than he the black misery of captivity?

"I will listen to what your chief has to say to me," he answered.

Before the day was over, the Paspahaghans had returned all that they had stolen which had not yet been sent to the Powhatan, had promised to steal no more and also had loaded as much corn as they could spare into the shallop. In return, Smith gave his word to protect them if the Powhatan should turn against them, and left payment in beads and copper toys.

They arrived at Jamestown to find that one of the Indians who served as a runner had been overcome by the fumes of burning charcoal as he slept by the fire. His friends believed him already dead. They were preparing his funeral when Smith revived him with some strong brandy. The story spread far and wide.

"We saw him lying dead and now he walks and hunts the deer as well as ever. Captain Smith's

magic is like a god's. He can bring back life to the dead."

And another said, "I heard that at Orapaks one of the Powhatan's warriors tried to dry out some of the stolen fire-powder. He warmed it over the fire on a piece of armour, just as he had seen the white soldiers do. But it changed into thunder and lightning and killed him and hurt all those who stood watching. Captain Smith's magic turned on those who stole it from him and destroyed them. It is foolish to try to fight against such a werowance."

Even the Powhatan, at long last, seemed to come to the same opinion. Captain Smith was invincible and indestructible. At the great chief's orders, the Indians therefore began to return all the tools and weapons they had stolen, even some which the white men had not yet missed.

During the next two months the Indians made no trouble. The colony's work went forward swiftly. Under Smith's vigorous direction twenty houses were built, the church re-roofed, an excellent well dug inside the fort, a blockhouse erected on the neck of land connecting Jamestown with the mainland, some glass produced and many more nets and weirs constructed for fishing. Between thirty and forty acres of land were prepared for seed and planted.

Nearly five hundred chickens were now foraging about for themselves and required no extra feed. The swine had increased by sixty young pigs. The surplus hogs were carried by boat to Hog Island, where a second blockhouse was built to watch the river for shipping. Its small garrison spent their time cutting trees for clapboard and wainscot.

It was too good to last. In the middle of April the keeper of the storehouse opened a new cask of

corn and found it devoured by rats. He opened another and another—all were the same. Rats were everywhere. Brought in the ships from England, they had increased to thousands and nothing had escaped them.

The hollow eyes of famine stared the Jamestown settlers in the face once again. As the weather grew warmer, its ally, the fever, began to strike, also. Smith moved resolutely against those two old enemies. There was little chance of getting more corn from the Indians at this season. Never too provident, they had used what they had and were themselves having to forage far and wide for fish and game. Smith used his new-made alliance with the Paspaheghans to good effect by billeting among them the men who had recovered from the fever but were still too weak to work, and they fared well.

Of the rest, he sent some down to the Chesapeake for oysters, others, under Percy, to Point Comfort for fish. Some, with Francis West in command, he sent up the river to the Falls to see what they could find. They returned with nothing but acorns.

"Acorns!" one of the men exclaimed in disgust. "Are we swine to eat such trash? I'd rather starve."

Smith had seen the Indians make a nourishing bread by pounding acorns with dried sturgeon meat and mixing it with herbs. They also used a root, called tockwagh, which they pounded, boiled and baked. He explained the preparation to some of his men and set them at it.

"All that labour and what have you? Nothing fit to put into a Christian man's mouth. Have we sunk to eating heathen messes?" one of them muttered. "Aren't there still some hogs and chickens?"

Smith's voice was hard as he answered.

"The hogs and chickens will be used sparingly, and then only for the sick. We must keep our stock going. This food you scorn could feed you well, though it's your privilege to starve if you choose. But if you eat at all, you will work for it. You'll work not only for yourself but for our sick."

His blue eyes blazed into the sullen, rebellious faces.

"By the God that made me, the sick shall not starve while I live! And any one of you able-bodied rogues who doesn't gather as much food as I do during the day shall be set across the river and left to fend for himself."

Iron-handed measures, but just and effective. Of the two hundred souls left in his charge—except for those who had been drowned—only seven died, and they of the fever. Not a single Jamestown colonist died of hunger while Smith was President.

Though he had little time to waste on them, the fact that the traitors among the glassmakers were still at large rankled in Smith's mind. He sent squads of soldiers to Orapaks from time to time hoping to capture them, or to persuade the Powhatan to hand them over. But the wily fellows disappeared into the forest whenever the white men appeared. Richard Salvage reported that they had told the Powhatan that they were Spaniards and that Spanish ships would soon arrive and destroy Smith and his colony. Although the chief did not believe them fully, he thought it prudent to keep them with him and so be ready to deal with the Spaniards if they should indeed come.

"They're living idly on the best the land affords," Salvage concluded.

"Some fine morning the Powhatan will learn how they have lied to him," Smith said. "Then they'll wish they had come back here for a swift, clean death by hanging, poor knaves."

Late in June, Michael Sicklemore returned at last from his trip to Chawmonock. He had found no trace whatever of Raleigh's men or of the white captives, either. No sizeable stream flowed through that country from the north-west, nor had he seen any sign of gold.

On July 10 an English vessel appeared on the river. It was commanded by a sharp-nosed young captain, Samuel Argall. He had come to fish for sturgeon and to trade with the colonists, he reported. He brought much-needed provisions and great news.

Nine tall ships were being fitted in England for Virginia and five hundred new planters had signed aboard them. Leading this expedition was Lord Delaware, older brother of Master Francis West. The London Company had been reorganized. Many gentlemen of fortune and high rank had put money into the venture and some were sailing with the fleet. They were bringing a new charter and new officers to rule in Virginia. And Captain Argall had brought a letter for Captain Smith.

Smith took the sealed packet, walked down to the river's edge and seated himself on an overturned boat before he opened it. Sam Collier followed him, solemn-faced.

"A new charter, new officers, Captain? What does that mean?" he asked.

Smith was deep in his reading and he did not answer. This missive was in the same vein as before. It complained of the poor cargoes Smith had sent back to England, of his cruelty to the savages, and

his own blunt and too outspoken letter. The gentlemen of the London Council resented its tone and its content. He would hear more from them later, when the expedition arrived, and he would be dealt with suitably by the new authorities.

He looked up from the pages, frowning out over the shining water.

"It's just as Newport foretold," he said. "But how could I endure my own company those long winter nights if I had written them any less than the truth?"

Chapter sixteen



THE ships arrived a month later, but not the proud fleet of nine great vessels Argall had described. Four limped in at first, storm-battered, half their rigging gone, then three more. Captain Webb, of the *Lion*, was the first master ashore. His glance passed over Smith, standing bare-headed among his companions in his ragged shirt, breeches and boots.

"Will some one kindly direct me to your President?" Webb asked.

"At your service, Captain," Smith answered. "I'm Captain Smith."

At Webb's startled, incredulous look Smith grinned.

"Did you expect a velvet gown and a golden chain of office?" he asked. "No, Captain, there's no blame if you did. But I *am* the President of Virginia and I welcome you most heartily."

A West Indian hurricane, Webb reported, had struck and scattered the fleet. One small ketch had been seen to sink with all on board, and the flagship, the *Sea-Venture*, was still unsighted. The rest had lost many passengers and so many of their crews,

fighting the storm, that they had had to re-apportion the sailors among the ships while still at sea in order to navigate at all.

"If the *Sea-Venture* is truly lost, it's a disaster indeed," Webb continued. "The two commissioners, Sir Thomas Gates and Sir George Somers, were aboard her. With them they had the letters patent, their commissions, our bills of lading and lists of provisions and all the orders for setting up the new government."

"All in one vessel?" Smith raised his eyebrows.

"The noble lords couldn't agree which was to take precedence, therefore they went together," Webb said. "But we're well organized nevertheless. We held a meeting at sea and the passengers selected new leaders. Captain Ratcliffe, commander of the *Diamond*, Captain Martin of the *Falcon* and Master Gabriel Archer, all veterans of Virginia."

Anas Todkill, standing at Smith's elbow, let out an explosive oath.

"Those three carrion crows back again?" he cried. "Now by all that's damnable, Captain Smith, let's get the gallows ready and hang them at once before they can begin their cursed mischief!"

Smith looked out over the water at the boats being lowered from the other vessels. Ratcliffe, Martin and Archer again, returning in the heat of summer along with the mosquitoes and the stifling, sticky mists from the river? Even more dangerous in their own way to the safety of the colony than was the fever.

"No, let them come," he said. "But they must be made to understand that until the new commissioners arrive, I am still President here."

The news that the hated three had returned spread

swiftly. The men gathered to watch them disembark. When Ratcliffe, most despised of all, stepped ashore he was greeted by such a chorus of jeers and catcalls that he turned sallow than ever.

"This is your idea of a courteous greeting, I suppose, Captain Smith?" he said.

Smith called out a sharp order and the noise ceased.

"No, Captain Ratcliffe. Your welcome had no prompting from me. It came direct from your old comrades' hearts," he said.

"I can afford to overlook your insults. Your day here will very shortly be done," Ratcliffe said. "When our new governors arrive, you'll get what you have long deserved."

Now the newcomers swarmed ashore by boatloads and the lean, shabby, work-scarred veterans of the battle with the wilderness watched them come.

"It's the same story," Reade, the blacksmith, murmured. "Soft-handed lordlings in taffeta, their valets and their barbers. Pasty-faced lads from London gutters. Yes, God help them, even women and babes! But show me enough skilled workmen or seasoned soldiers to round out one night's watch."

Once again, with hard and stubborn resolution, Smith began the struggle to bring order out of this new chaos. The added three hundred overcrowded Jamestown desperately. The close quarters bred friction between the veteran planters and the arrogant, lawless strangers, who far outnumbered them.

"We must start new settlements at once," Smith decided.

He sent Master Francis West, with a hundred and twenty of the new immigrants and a shipload of tools

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and provisions, up to the Falls of the James. Nansamond, down the river, was the site selected for another settlement. He offered the leadership of this new colony to George Percy but, to his surprise, the young officer declined on the plea of ill-health.

"You are still weak from the fever, I know. Perhaps I shouldn't have pressed more responsibility on you so soon," Smith said. "But in a few weeks——"

Percy shook his head.

"Why deceive ourselves? Virginia is doomed. The London Council are misguided fools and this new lot they've sent will bring all our work to ruin. I don't want to be here to see it. I'm sailing for England on the next ship."

Smith stood silent for a moment before he spoke again.

"You would admit defeat? No, that's the fever in you speaking, not my good comrade. We're not beaten, merely schooled by our mistakes. We've only just begun to learn our business here. Digging the foundations has been hard but from now on our work will begin to show itself for what it is, as it rises up in the air and light where all the world can watch it grow!"

George Percy listened to the ringing, confident voice, met the ardent blue eyes, and the fog of despair hemming him in began almost visibly to lift. Smith had done miracles before. Could he again? In this fearless, resourceful, resolute man there was a contagious courage, a lasting, durable fire. Nothing, it seemed, could quench it and he could even kindle a similar flame in others.

"Give me a little time to think it over," Percy

said, and Smith clapped him on the back but said no more.

Should he take the post at Nansamond himself? Smith wondered. His term as President ended next month. Why not resign it now, pick a company of his own men and be free of this hideous mess at Jamestown. He could build soundly there, unhampered. It was a tempting prospect.

He called a meeting of the Council, put the idea before them and handed in his resignation. Then came the task of picking his successor. Smith began to doubt the wisdom of his move when John Martin was elected on the grounds that he had been one of the original planters.

"Well, he's less of a knave than Ratcliffe and less of a fool than Archer," Smith said bluntly. "Let him try."

But Martin kept the office only three hours. The colonists who knew him of old broke into wild rebellion the moment the news was out, and Smith therefore took up the Presidency again. Martin then announced his willingness to head the colony at Nansamond if he could have a company of the new arrivals to go with him. He set sail, well provided with tools and supplies. Smith had already arranged with the local tribe of Indians to trade food to the planters until they could be self-supporting, but he watched the departure with misgivings.

"At least it relieves the pressure of numbers here at Jamestown," he told Percy. "Now have the shallop made ready and manned for me. I'm going up to the Falls to see how they're getting on."

Half-way up the river they sighted the ship returning. Aboard it was Francis West, going back

for more supplies. The larger vessel swept downstream leaving the shallop bobbing in its wake, and Smith pressed on, fearing what he might find at the outpost left without a leader.

His face grew dark as he saw where the men were settled to build their village.

"This low, marshy ground? And enough forest hemming you in on three sides to hide a thousand savages if they should turn against you? Look, you can see where the spring floods washed over it before—do you doubt that they will again?"

When he pointed it out, they could see their mistake.

"But where else can we go?" they asked. "Up on the hill yonder there's an Indian village. All the high land belongs to them."

It was the town of Powhatan, Smith remembered, where he and Newport had been entertained on their first exploring voyage up the James. He recalled well how he had admired the site and had even pictured a great city rising on the slopes above the river. Perhaps this was the time to found that city of the future.

He therefore bargained with the Indians and bought their town—houses, cornfields and all—for a large amount of copper. West's men moved, bag and baggage, into the well-built Indian lodges which were even enclosed in a strong stockade. The red men, moreover, promised to sell them fish, venison and corn at a fair, set price. In return the white men's guns were to protect them from their enemies, the Monacans.

The Indians were pleased with their bargain and eager to be friendly, and they began at once to build another village a few miles distant. By the

end of a week things were going so well that Smith boarded the shallop to return to Jamestown. They were barely out in midstream when the sound of Indian war-whoops and musket fire echoed from the shore. Smith brought his craft about and returned.

"The Indians attacked us and killed a score of men!" The survivors were in a babbling panic.

Sternly Smith summoned the Indian chief to a parley. He came, for he dared not disobey the invincible Captain.

"Your friends are my friends, Captain Smith," he said. "But as soon as you were on the water, some of them came into our new village. They took what they could find of our corn and our women and shot their guns at us when we tried to defend them. Our enemies, the Monacans, are no worse than these white men who had promised to help us!"

It did not take Smith long to discover that the Indian was telling the truth. By skilful questioning he singled out the guilty men among the whites and clapped them in irons. Peace was established. After a final, urgent warning he made ready to leave once again.

The ship, returning up the river with Master Francis West aboard, delayed him next. West listened to Smith's account of what had happened and pursed his lips.

"You put *my* men in fetters, Captain?" he said. "They are not common soldiers, but well-born, high-spirited young gentlemen. Perhaps they were a little boisterous, but they harmed no one, surely, except wretched heathen savages. As for these Indian hovels you've put my men in——" He

looked about him disdainfully. "We'll return to the site I selected, far superior in every way."

"Master West has put on new dignity since my Lord Delaware was made Governor," Anas Todkill muttered angrily. "And he'll allow none of us to forget it!"

But Smith could find no words. After a single, fiery, scornful look, he returned and plunged down the hill to the waterside, nor did he give one backward glance at the spot where he had so fondly pictured a mighty city.

"Shall we camp here on shore?" Sam Collier asked, running to keep up with his long strides. "It's almost sunset."

"I'll sleep in the shallop. I want no more sight or sound or smell of that company there," Smith said.

John Smith lay for a long time sleepless while his mind twisted and turned and tortured itself over the weary problem of how to keep these men from the fate towards which they were rushing in such headlong fashion. Above him the bright arch of stars wheeled slowly down the sky. How many times, in how many far-separated lands had he lain as he did now, watching those brilliant multitudes?

They had been high and remote over the windy fields of Lincolnshire, soft and low and luminous over the hedges the night he had run away from Master Sendall. When he had bivouacked in the Low Countries, the stars had mostly been hidden by mist and fogs, he remembered. They had been clear and sharp again when he was camping in the woods, studying the science of artillery and planning the great deeds he would do. Lord, how long ago that was!

In France, then, walking the roads, sleeping in the fields, aboard Captain La Roche's ship—on what seas did he sail now? Egypt, Italy, the wheatfields of Hungary. His three duels with the Turks. Sigismund and his patent-of-arms. Henry Volda's pale, bitter face. *Put not your trust in princes*—he had almost forgotten that. The Rotheturm Pass. Acrid smell of gunpowder, thundering cannon—was that Sam Collier screaming? He started up into a blinding, searing blast. His clothing and the boat about him were all ablaze. He leaped overboard and now he was struggling in the black water, deafened, stunned, conscious only of pain that stabbed his body through and through.

After a period of blessed oblivion Smith regained his senses. He was in the boat moving downstream through the grey mists of dawn. Sam Collier, Todkill and the rest of his men were hanging over him with grief-stricken faces. The pain caught him and he groaned aloud in spite of himself.

"What was it?" he asked, when he had breath enough to speak.

"A bag of gunpowder exploded beside you while you slept, Captain," Phettiplace, Master of the shallop, told him.

"I thought I heard a boat moving in the water alongside just before the explosion," Sam Collier said. "I saw the glow of a match and I screamed, but I wasn't in time."

"We would have avenged you on the scoundrels who did it, but we are only ten to their hundred, and besides, we wanted to get you to a surgeon," Todkill said.

Now their faces were whirling before Smith's eyes as the agony of his burns clawed and tore at him.

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Jamestown and the nearest surgeon were almost a hundred miles below the Falls. He clenched his teeth and bit back another groan.

"You're making all the speed you can?" he whispered.

"Yes, Captain," Phettiplace answered. "We'll get you there, never doubt it."

"Good lads," Smith whispered, and then set himself silently to endure the unendurable.

At Jamestown the surgeons did what they could, but Smith's burns were too severe for their skill or medicines. "Back in England there might be some chance of cure—that is, if you were able to survive the voyage. But here——" The doctor shook his head.

A ship was due to sail within the week and Smith faced the hard choice. His heart was here. To leave Virginia would be a kind of death, he knew. But of what use was he to the colony now? His term as President had only a few weeks to run. While he lay helpless, the newcomers were already deciding on their next leader and ignored Smith completely. They had chosen George Percy.

George Percy's a brave fellow, honest and upright—Smith thought. But beyond that? He shook his head. There was no spark of leadership in the man, none of the hard, decisive toughness needed to master and rule this turbulent crew. The blood of Hotspur Harry Percy ran cold and slow in his descendant. If I were once well again——

Then another spasm of pain shook him and bent him almost double. Crippled as he was, he could do nothing, nothing, and what he was suffering now would be little indeed compared to the agony it would be to watch the blasting of his hopes and the

ruin of all he had sweated and bled to build. He would go back to England, be healed of his hurt and then, God willing, he would try again.

His soldiers and comrades crowded about him to say farewell. There were tears in many eyes ; young Sam Collier blubbered openly. They thought him a dying man and they sensed that, without him, the colony was facing almost as sure a doom. Writing of this parting some years later, Richard Potts, Clerk of the Council, described the feelings of Smith's friends as his ship moved slowly from her anchorage.

"What shall I say ? But thus we lost him, that in all his proceedings made justice his first guide and experience his second ; ever hating baseness, sloth, pride and indignity more than any dangers ; that never allowed more for himself than his soldiers with him ; that upon no danger would send them where he would not lead them himself ; that would never see us want what he either had, or could by any means get us ; that would rather want than borrow, or starve than not pay ; that loved actions more than words and hated falsehood and cozenage worse than death ; whose adventures were our lives and whose loss, our deaths."

The October sunlight shone on the spreading sails ; a fine breeze ruffled the surface of the river and on both banks trees blazed in the incredible glory of autumn. The sailors were jubilant at the thought of England and home, but Smith looked back at the diminishing promontory of Jamestown and his heart had never felt so desolate. Why, what a coxcomb he must be to think the success of this great venture depended on him alone, he told himself. By his own careful count they were well provided. Four hundred and ninety persons, three ships, seven

smaller boats, commodities ready to trade with the Indians, the harvest newly gathered and ten weeks' provision in the store. Twenty-four large and smaller cannon, three hundred muskets (snapances and firelocks), shot, powder and match sufficient, more than enough swords and pikes to arm each man. The savages' language and habits well known to over a hundred well-trained and expert soldiers. Nets and weirs for fishing, tools and clothes in good supply. Six mares and a horse, more than five hundred swine; hens, chickens, goats and some sheep—he went over the figures carefully. Surely they had everything such an enterprise ever needed.

The ship swept slowly on down the broad and shining river. The wooded shores moved past, the outermost fringes of that endless stretch of forest blanketing the wilderness. For all the explorations he had made, how little he, or anyone, even the Indians, really knew of it except that its vastness was beyond anyone's knowledge.

Forgetting himself, he moved suddenly and there was the pain stabbing through him again. His face went wet with sweat and he clung to the ship's rail for support, but even while he fought the torment, he was vowing to himself once again to survive this voyage, to find his cure and to return somehow to these fateful, still unconquered shores.

Chapter seventeen



THE voyage back to England was a long nightmare of suffering for Smith. Then came weary, disheartening months while the surgeons applied first one ointment, then another to his slowly healing burns. As soon as he was able to limp about the streets, he presented himself at the London headquarters of the Virginia Company.

He was received with cold formality. Wingfield, Ratcliffe, Martin and Archer had done all they could to blast Smith's reputation.

"We wish to hear no more of your wranglings," the Secretary said. "Now that there are others in charge at Jamestown, men of high rank who know how to use authority, the colony should at last begin to prosper."

"You can't wish that more fervently than I do," Smith answered. "But remember, sir, I am a stockholder, also. I went out to Virginia with the first planters, and I was President for the space of a year. Surely my experience should be of value! I have set down a list of recommendations, and I demand that the gentlemen of the

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Council read what I have written and give it their consideration."

The Secretary took the paper and dropped it on his desk.

"I will give them your letter," he said.

"I know of only one way of judging the future—by experience and reason," Smith persisted earnestly. "And both warn me that disaster is breeding there."

"At least"—the official spoke sharply—"at least pray do not go about spreading that opinion. Unless you wish to drive away investors and complete the ruin that your methods began!"

At that Smith's eyes flashed in his haggard face with their old forthright fire. He turned and limped from the room and out into the street. These comfortable men in London cared nothing for far-away Virginia except as a source of profit for themselves. And even then they were too short-sighted to see where their own advantage lay.

How could he get the truth before more clear-eyed Englishmen who held their country's good close to their hearts? His own voice would be feeble enough here in the clattering roar of London, even if he had the force to go about shouting his warnings. He did not wish to discourage investors or colonists either—merely to make sure that they had a chance for success. With all his soul he believed that England's strength, perhaps her very life, depended upon her building a place equal to that of France and Spain and Portugal in the New World.

He walked slowly back through the crowded, muddy streets to the tavern where he lodged. The host met him at the door.

"Captain Smith, there's a gentleman waiting to see you," he said.

A pleasant-faced man in clerical dress greeted him.

"My name is William Simmonds and I have long wished to meet you," he said.

Dr. Simmonds shared Smith's fervour for the establishment of strong colonies in the Western World.

"I'm not able to go, as you did, and shoulder the burdens and hardships myself," he said. "All I can do is read the words of other men and picture it through their eyes. I read your book, *A True Relation*, with the greatest pleasure, Captain Smith."

"Why, thank you, sir," Smith said. "That's praise indeed from a scholar like yourself. It was written in great haste in the form of a letter—no one was more surprised than I to learn that it had been published as a book. The friend to whom I wrote it got that idea himself, then pruned and shaped it for the printer."

"Your style is clear and vigorous, as fits you, Captain," Simmonds told him. "What I came here for was to learn if you plan other books. Do you have a printer engaged? If not, I have connections with the Press and I would think it an honour to assist you in any way."

Smith listened first with surprise, then with sudden excitement. This could be his answer! He leaned over and grasped Simmonds' hand.

"I think you have solved a vexing riddle for me," he said.

He began to write at once. He found the unaccustomed work slow and fatiguing, but the burning urge to share his knowledge and to win converts to his cause drove him on. The next book was to be a careful, detailed description of Virginia, to go with

the maps he had made. *A Map of Virginia* would be a good title. After that he would tell the story of the first settlement, with all its problems and mistakes, from its beginning until the time of his departure. He need not depend on his own memory alone, but could draw from the accounts and journals of his companions, Nathaniel Powell, Thomas Studley, William Phettiplace, John Russel, Richard Wiffin, Thomas Abbay and Anas Todkill, giving each one due credit.

Summer came on again while he was deep in his writing. Sir Thomas Gates arrived in a ship from Virginia—Sir Thomas Gates, thought to be lost in the *Sea-Venture*—alive and bringing news! Smith hurried to the Council headquarters and heard him tell the tale of the *Sea-Venture's* wreck on the Bermudas, and how they built another ship there which carried them at last to Virginia.

His description of what he and Sir George Somers found at Jamestown was grim and terrible. Of the four hundred and ninety souls Smith had left in October, only sixty were alive in May when the ship arrived. The rest were dead either of starvation or slain by the Indians who had begun their attacks as soon as they knew that Smith was gone.

Gates and Somers had taken the survivors aboard their vessel and all were on their way down the river to England, leaving Virginia behind for ever, when Lord Delaware's richly laden fleet met them. Somehow he persuaded them to turn back with him and make a new start.

As the meeting ended, the Secretary sought Smith out.

"Captain Smith, you were right," he said bleakly. Smith gave him a haunted, stricken look.

"Would to God"—his voice broke—"would to God I had been wrong!"

He scanned the list of survivors. Thankfully he recognized many names—the veteran colonists had stood the ordeal better than the newcomers. Percy, Todkill, Sam Collier, the Phettiplace brothers, Raleigh Crashaw, Richard Wiffin, Thomas Salvage. Ratcliffe, he noted, had been slain with all his men when he tried to trade with the Powhatan. As for Master Francis West, he had departed in a ship for England as soon as the hardships began.

He went back to his writing. Before the book was finished, he was planning another voyage across the sea. Not back to Virginia, he decided. There was no place for a simple Captain among the high-ranking noblemen now in authority there. Moreover, he had been studying accounts of the region between Virginia and the French settlements in Canada. The few existing charts contradicted one another, and George Popham's northern settlement had failed. But everything Smith learned stirred his desire to explore that coastline for himself, to find a site for another colony.

He could not afford to swing the venture alone, but at last he found a group of four gentlemen who were ready to outfit two ships for whaling, fishing and trading for furs, and, most important, to search the shore for a rumoured mine of gold. On March 3, 1614, the two ships left the Downs and Smith was aboard, embarked once more for the Western World. They took the shorter northern route used by fishing vessels; winds were favourable and by April they had sighted land. As the shoreline began to take shape, Smith's thoughts turned to his first view of Virginia seven years before. What would he find

here? Would the Indians have the same customs as those in Virginia? Would there be a great chief ruling over them with whom he must learn to bargain and deal?

The image of Pocahontas sprang suddenly into his mind as he had last seen her when she came through the snowy woods to warn him of his danger. Her dark eyes, bright with tears in the firelight, her voice as she said his name—"Captain-John-Smith." Where was she now? He had heard that Argall had brought her to Jamestown as a hostage for the Powhatan's friendship, and that, as before, she had enchanted all hearts. Surely the Powhatan had redeemed her by this time. If so, she was as surely married now to a warrior of her own race. He sighed, thinking of that light-footed, merry child with an Indian woman's burdens. Wherever she was, he wished her well with all his heart.

The land drew nearer, and now Smith could see that it differed from the white beaches and the low wooded shores of Virginia. This was a bold and rocky coast, broken by islands, jutting headlands, bays and rivers. Dark evergreens grew almost down to the water's edge, and beyond the shore a series of blue hills arched against the bright spring sky.

Thomas Hunt, the Master of one of the ships, steered now for an island called by the Indians Monhegan, where he had made a fishing camp on a previous voyage. The ships anchored and the men set about assembling their fishing boats.

While the sailors fished, Smith set off in one of the small boats with eight picked men to explore the coastline. This was the work he loved. Day after day for the next two months he moved slowly along

the shore from the Penobscot to Cape Cod, sounding as he went, charting channels, rocks, bays, inlets and rivers, marking them down on his map, giving them names of his own where Indian names were lacking. Wherever he saw the smoke of a village, he landed and made friends with the people, picking up their language and trading with them for furs. Always he questioned them about their country and their customs.

All he saw delighted him. It was now midsummer but the air was fresh and bracing; there was none of the muggy, stifling heat of the Virginia tidelands. As he moved south-west, the land became less mountainous and more fertile.

"Somewhere along here I'll start my new colony," he resolved. "Perhaps on this fair headland. It has a spacious, well-protected harbour." And he gave it the name of Cape Tragabigzanda (later changed to Cape Anne). Three islands just off shore he called the Three Turks' Heads, in memory of Charatza and his Eastern adventures.

To the whole region he gave the hopeful name, New England. As he scanned the river valleys and the sunny upland meadows he thought constantly of London's crowded, foul-smelling streets. Of the country, too, where English farmers struggled so hopelessly to make a living on the small acreage for which they could afford rent, while hordes of able-bodied labourers tramped the roads, desperate for work.

What a boon to the huddled populace of England this spacious land could be! No place for weaklings—he knew that only too well. But vigorous, hard-working men could come here with little but courage and strong arms and they could soon have freedom

and independence. A farmer could carve his own land out of the wilderness and it would be his indeed, unburdened by crushing rent or taxes, greedy landlord or jealous, hampering, state officials. A bright, heroic vision, but surely not beyond the bounds of practical reason.

Back aboard the ship at last, Smith was voicing his enthusiasm for his new colony when Master Thomas Hunt spoke up sourly.

"If a colony is founded here, where will the profit of our fishing go? Why should we bring in rivals?"

"Not rivals—customers!" Smith said. He soon forgot Master Hunt's words—but he was to remember them later.

Hunt's ship still had room in her hold for more fish, and it remained behind, when Smith's vessel sailed homeward. Smith's craft reached England in August and landed at Plymouth with so rich a load of salted fish and furs that its sponsors were almost reconciled to the failure to find either whales or a gold mine.

Now Smith bent all his considerable energy to securing money and settlers for his "New England" colony. In Plymouth he met Sir Ferdinando Gorges who assured him of his interest and aid. Other men from the West of England followed until Smith had the promise that four good ships well freighted would be ready at Plymouth by Christmas.

The four ships had dwindled to two by the time they were ready, late in the spring. With these he set sail, but only a few hundred miles from shore Smith's ship sprung so serious a leak that it was forced to return to Plymouth for repairs. The other ship, ignorant of their trouble, had disappeared over the horizon.

To mend the leaking vessel would consume so much vital time that Smith decided not to wait, but to hire another. The only ship available was a bark of sixty tons, much smaller than his first. Although some of his men and supplies had to be left behind, Smith felt obliged to follow his companion vessel without delay and set sail once again from Plymouth on June 24, 1615.

Now Fate abruptly turned against him. While he was working over his papers in his cabin, Edward Chambers, Master of the vessel, appeared suddenly in the doorway.

"There's a pirate vessel just astern—it's overtaking us fast."

Smith strode out in time to see a flash, then hear the report of a cannon. So the pirate meant business.

"Well, man your guns, sir!" Smith ordered. "Why this delay?"

"It's a larger, better-armed ship than ours, and it's English. Wouldn't it be prudent to yield and ask for terms?" Chambers asked. Behind him Miller, the mate, and Digby, the pilot, nodded. "The chances are we can buy them off," Chambers added.

"Yield to scurvy pirates? Their sails are stained and ragged—they look as if they've been long at sea. I'll wager their ammunition's low, and I mean to find out," was Smith's answer.

The boldness of the little vessel in offering to fight one more than twice its size seemed to surprise the enemy, and they signalled for a parley. When they saw the ship's commander, a shout went up from the pirate's decks.

"Captain John Smith of Willoughby?" a voice

bellowed. "Captain Smith, remember me? I'm Matthew Brown from your regiment in Hungary."

There were at least fifteen of his old soldiers aboard the pirate ship, Smith learned. They had been fighting in Tunis, had tired of it, had stolen the vessel out of the harbour and set sail. None of them were navigators and they sadly lacked a leader.

"Come aboard, be our Commander," Brown begged, and the others cheered the idea lustily. "We'll all make our fortunes, Captain."

But Smith would not abandon his New England voyage, and the disappointed pirates sailed sadly away.

Not long afterwards, two French pirate vessels also gave chase and overtook the dauntless little bark. Once again Chambers would have surrendered if Smith had not threatened to blow up the powder magazine, and the pirates, deciding that so small a prize was not worth the battle, sailed away also.

They were half-way across the Atlantic, when more sails appeared on the horizon. Soon they found themselves in the midst of a fleet of French men-of-war. Smith, carrying the Royal Seal of England on his commission, went aboard the Admiral's flagship to show his papers. On first one excuse, then another they kept him there while a party of their men boarded his ship and rifled its stores. Worst of all, they distributed his men among their own vessels, which, stricken by disease, were short of sailors.

Although there were now nine French ships to his one, Smith would not submit to this outrage. He faced the Admiral.

"Officer of the French Royal Navy? Bah—

you're worse than a pirate ! Give me back my men, my vessel, and my stores or else, as God is my witness, I'll hale you through every court in France and before your King, if need be, for common thievery ! ”

The Admiral was a fair-minded man and he yielded at last.

“ Though it seems a deal of hullabaloo over one small bark,” he complained.

With the Admiral's written order that his goods and men should be returned, Smith went from ship to ship of the fleet gathering them up until by nightfall all were aboard his bark once more. In a high good humour, he had himself rowed back and boarded the flagship to pay his respects to the Admiral and to say farewell. A sudden, violent gale made the fleet scatter for safety. When morning came Smith's ship had disappeared, while he, with nothing but the clothes he wore, was still aboard the Admiral's vessel.

One of the French sailors who had rowed with him the day before reported that he had overheard Chambers and his cronies planning to return to England.

“ There's too much fighting on this voyage. We shipped to fish, not to shoot. Captain Smith may engage the whole French Navy in battle all by himself if he wishes—I'm for home.”

Smith for once was speechless. The French Admiral, enormously amused, had nevertheless been struck by Smith's daring and resolution, and he put him aboard one of his best vessels.

“ You're worth the whole crew I gave back to you—my bargain wasn't bad, after all. I'm putting you directly under the Captain. If we meet any English

vessels you'll be a prisoner, but when we engage Spaniards or Portuguese or pirates, you can fight for us and rate a share of the booty."

The next months, then, Smith spent as an unwilling guest aboard the French man-of-war. Whenever the red cross of St. George appeared on the horizon he was locked in his cabin; at other times he was as free as any of the ship's officers. If his heart had not been so set on his New England, the experience might not have been too distasteful. To while away the tedious hours at sea when there was no fighting to do, he set to work on another book—a detailed description of New England as he remembered it, and he set down all his arguments for English settlements there.

With the coming of autumn the French vessel turned towards home laden with the spoils of many encounters. In sight of land at last, Smith was summoned to the Captain's cabin. The French Captain proceeded to read a long, fantastic indictment charging Smith with numerous crimes, chief of which was that he had attacked and burned a village in Canada the year before!

Far from receiving his share of the booty he had fought for, he would be clapped into a French prison the moment they reached port. His friend the Admiral, who might have helped him, had divided his fleet and was now on the other side of the Atlantic.

That night a heavy downpour of rain drove everyone under hatches. Smith stuffed his manuscript inside his shirt, climbed down the stern into the ship's boat and cut the tow rope loose. He had neither food, water nor sail and only a single oar—and his resolve never again to be a prisoner!

The storm increased. In spite of desperate scull-

ing Smith was swept helplessly out to sea. Why his flimsy craft was not capsized by the waves he never knew. It's the hand of God again, he thought. At last the tide and the wind changed. His boat was driven landward and flung upon a low, oozy shoal at a river's mouth. There some fowlers found him at dawn half dead with fatigue and chilled to his very bones. From them he learned that the ship from which he had escaped had been smashed upon a reef, her Captain and half her crew drowned.

He sold his boat for enough money to take him to Rochelle. His chill had turned into a high fever when he finally found lodgings. His landlady, Madame Chanois, proved a kind and excellent nurse, and through her care he passed the crisis of his illness and was soon on the way to recovery.

When he had strength to be on his feet, he put in a complaint with the French Judge of the Admiralty and applied for his share of whatever booty was left on the wrecked ship. He would leave no stone unturned to recover the funds he needed for his projects. Then he set out for England.

It was December of 1615 when he reached Plymouth once again. Chambers, Miller and Digby had reported him dead, and the sight of him turned them as pale as though he had indeed been a ghost. It was some satisfaction to confront them in a law court and see them laid by the heels for their cowardly desertion, but it could neither bring back the time lost nor the money wasted on that fruitless voyage.

The other ship had now returned from New England. When Smith did not appear, the men had spent their time in fishing and had brought back a good cargo. But they brought disquieting news. The Indians were aroused and hostile. Master

Thomas Hunt had captured twenty-seven of the savages with their chief, Squanto, and had taken them to the West Indies and sold them there as slaves to the Spanish. The tribes would trust no white men now.

Smith remembered, then, the shipmaster's words.

"Why spoil a good business by inviting rivals?"

So Hunt had done his best—or worst—to ruin Smith's plans for settlement.

Nevertheless, Smith finished his book. It was printed in June of 1616 under the title *A Description of New England*. He presented it, together with a letter of dedication, to the King's son, young Prince Charles, who showed enough interest in the proposed colony to go over the maps and change the names of some of the landmarks.

The next few months Smith spent travelling through the West of England with copies of his books and maps in the effort to raise more funds for his New England colony. Interest was lively enough, but hard cash was another matter. If he had promised mines of gold and silver—but that he would not do.

"Fishing was the basis of untold riches for the small, poor country of Holland. It could do the same for my New England," he argued. "Until the land could be settled and brought under cultivation—a matter of years, of course—the fishing industry there could pay at least half of the expenses of a colony. There was good timber, too—enough to build all the fishing boats they needed and the English Royal Navy as well. It would take time and toil, but Greece and Carthage, Rome and Venice rose from just such small beginnings."

Chapter eighteen



WHILE he was busy at this work, he heard more news from Virginia. Strange news, indeed, of little Pocahontas! She had married John Rolfe, an English gentleman of the colony, and she had been baptized a Christian under the name of Rebecca. With her husband and child she had landed at Plymouth and was now in England.

Smith wrote at once to the Queen, telling her of the Indian girl's aid to the starving English colony and of how she had twice saved his life at the risk of her own. Any favour done to the Powhatan's dearest child would surely benefit the King's subjects in Virginia.

Soon the country rang with the story of her reception at the Royal Court. Sir Thomas Dale and Lord and Lady Delaware had been her sponsors at masks and balls, where, Smith heard, she bore herself like a young empress.

That supple-limbed child of the forest now a court lady stiffly laced into stays and swaying hoops? Smith smiled, then sighed as he remembered her running through the forest or whirling

cartwheels with Sam Collier past the cabins at Jamestown.

Captain Smith went to pay his respects to the Lady Rebecca. In a panelled room among staring, whispering gallants and ladies he found her, small and slight, carrying herself with the same erect, delicate grace. She wore a starched white ruff above her narrow-waisted, wide-spreading velvet gown and she held a fan with a jewelled handle in her slim, brown fingers. Smith bowed and greeted her by her new name.

At the sound of his voice she started and turned slowly. He heard her sharp, indrawn breath. Her eyes were larger, more luminous than ever as she gave him one wild and tragic look, then covered her face with her hands. Nor would she speak to him or to anyone for a long time.

"They told me always that you were dead, Captain-John-Smith," she said at last. "I knew nothing else of you until I came here to England."

Then she began to speak in her own language, reproaching him for addressing her, like a stranger, by her new English name.

Awkwardly he explained that it was because of her high rank. She was a princess, he only a commoner. But she would not understand.

"In my father's country you were afraid of nothing, nothing, although danger was all about you. How can you fear me, here? No, I *will* call you father, and you *shall* call me your child as you did before, and I shall for ever and ever be your countryman."

More deeply shaken than he dared to admit, Smith paid his respects to John Rolfe and took his leave. For the first time in his life he felt old and

very tired. When he heard, a few weeks later, that Pocahontas had died suddenly in the harbour aboard the ship which was to have taken her back to Virginia, he felt that his own youth had died, also, and that it was buried, with the little forest princess, at Gravesend.

But there was still work for him to do, the work of planting his colony in New England. Money was difficult to raise, but the Plymouth branch of the Virginia Company, which controlled the territory, bestowed the title of Admiral of New England upon him in recognition of his services, a title and rank to be held for his lifetime.

"An admiral's rank with no fleet of ships to command is not the most practical of honours," he said to William Simmonds, "but it may help my projects and therefore I thank those lords and gentlemen most heartily."

One minor accident and then another conspired to keep him from leaving England's shores again. In 1617 he was ready to sail from Plymouth, but contrary winds which lasted an unheard-of three months kept the ships offshore until the opportune season had passed and the voyage was cancelled.

In 1620 he learned that a group of English "pilgrims" who had been living in Holland because of religious persecution, had decided to emigrate to the New World. Smith promptly offered his services to them. The fact that he was not of the same strict faith as they decided them against engaging him, although they made use of his books and his maps, and the *Mayflower* sailed without him. He followed the progress of their colony at Plymouth in New England with concern and no one was more

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generously pleased than he to learn how well it prospered, after the first hard winter.

"Though I could have saved them from that suffering," he said, sighing.

The new Virginia government's treatment of the Indians—a combination of bad faith and careless folly—had long seemed to Smith to spell disaster, but again all his warnings went unheeded. In 1622 came news of the great massacre of the settlers, planned and carried out by his old foe, Opechancanough. Smith offered to serve with any troops sent to subdue the savages. The London directors quibbled over the cost, and would only send him if he would pay the soldiers' wages himself. Smith had no such money to spend. He returned to his writing, his one sure means of promoting colonization, still his obsession and his dearest dream.

Slowly, slowly, but with inexorable momentum, the English colonies grew. Virginia recovered from the almost mortal blow of the massacre and began to prosper amazingly from the sale of her tobacco. She now boasted a House of Burgesses modelled after the English Parliament. Plymouth was firmly established, and other settlements were springing up all along the coast. Fishing camps became permanent villages, and stockholders in England sent out well-supplied parties to take up chartered land.

The character of the emigrants changed. No longer was it necessary to offer pardon to condemned felons to man the ships. Not reckless adventurers only, but sober, hard-working, able men who wished to build for the future sailed eagerly to the New World—the type Smith had longed for so vainly at Jamestown.

Meanwhile he continued to write with the single

aim—the welfare of the colonies, his “children,” as he called them. After his *A Description of New England*, and *New England's Trials*, came *The General History of Virginia*, and then *An Accidence for All Young Seamen*, or *The Seaman's Grammar*, a book of instructions for young shipmasters, the first of its kind.

He never married, but work and many friends filled his life. Among them were Ensign Carlton and Sergeant Robinson, old comrades of the wars in Hungary, who prevailed on him to take time out from his promotion of the colonies to write the story of his own life, *The Travels and Adventures of Captain John Smith*. In the fashion of the time, with others of Smith's friends, Carlton and Robinson wrote verses in his honour to be printed at the beginning of his books. His friend, John Donne, the famous Dean of St. Paul's, contributed a poem, also. Smith himself tried his hand at poetry. His *The Sea Marke* has a simple, convincing pathos, even to modern ears.

Then he turned back to his chosen field and wrote *Advertisements for the Unexperienced Planters*. He had begun *A History of the Sea* when Carlton visited him at the home of his good friend, Sir Samuel Saltonstall, in London. They were sitting in the garden, for the day was warm.

“And still you pour out your strength and your money to print these books on behalf of a land where, for all the fortune and toil and blood you have spent there, you own not one foot of ground!” Carlton said.

Smith's eyes were blue and clear as a boy's in his weathered face as he spoke in answer.

“If there were not one Englishman left there, as God be thanked there are many thousand, I would

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begin again with as small means as I did at first. Yes, and count myself well paid once more with nothing, so the country prospered," he said.

Only a few days after that John Smith was taken ill and he died on June 21, 1631, at the age of fifty-one. He met his end with cheerful courage. He had sensed God's hand guiding him all his life long, tempering him by hardship and danger to be His instrument in some vast purpose. Was it not something to have lived to see and understand how splendid a work he had been spared to do? He had fostered England's first permanent colony through its desperate beginnings, had watched it and many others take root and grow to strong, indomitable life, and he knew in his heart that no man could have done more.

